

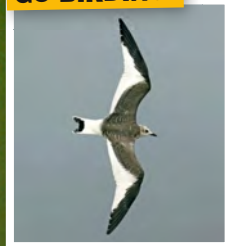
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HEN HARRIER BY JARI PELTONMÄKI (WWW.AGAMI.NL)



**MUCH** attention has been focused on the illegal massacre of migrating birds in the eastern Mediterranean, and thankfully something is being done to combat the slaughter – not least by this year's British Birdwatching Fair, which is raising funds for BirdLife's work in the region (see page 87). But what of the legalised massacre of birds? You don't have to go as far as Malta or the Middle East to witness the killing of birds on a vast scale – just take a look at what's happening on our own doorstep this month.

On 12 August, a barrage of guns will annihilate countless thousands of Red Grouse on moorlands around Britain. It's a 'sporting' tradition celebrated with some glee by participants, to the point where it has become known entirely inappropriately as 'the Glorious 12th'. The scale of the killing would be bad enough in itself, but that's just one of the problems: such industrial-scale slaughter necessitates an infrastructure with serious spin-off issues of its own, from permanent

alteration of upland habitats to ruthless predator control, both legal and illegal.

Inextricably caught up in this unholy mess is the Hen Harrier, now England's rarest breeding raptor, with the last few pairs persecuted almost to the point of extinction. Where there are grouse moors, it seems harriers are unlikely to survive. All aspects of this conflict are now laid bare in *Inglorious*, the new book from our columnist Mark Avery – read this month's exclusive extract to see why a permanent ban on driven grouse shooting has to be the best way to save the Hen Harrier (pages 37-39).

In the short term, wider attention must be drawn to the species and its plight. A fine start has been made by Hen Harrier Day, and the second annual programme of events will take place on 9 August this year (see page 36). As a magazine we're proud to be supporting Hen Harrier Day, and urge all readers to do the same.

*Dominic Mitchell*

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#### EDITORIAL OFFICE

Warners Group Publications plc  
The Chocolate Factory

5 Clarendon Road  
London N22 6XJ

Tel: 020 8881 0550

Fax: 020 8881 0990

Email: editorial@birdwatch.co.uk

Web: www.birdwatch.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/  
birdwatchmagazine

Twitter: @BirdwatchExtra

**Managing Editor:** Dominic Mitchell  
**Assistant Editor:** Rebecca Armstrong  
**Staff Writer:** David Callahan  
**Head of Design:** Lynn Wright  
**Optics Editor:** Mike Alibone  
**Photographic Consultant:** Steve Young  
**Identification Consultants:**  
Andy Stoddart and Keith Vinicombe

**Publisher:** Rob McDonnell

**Advertisement Sales Manager:**

Ian Lycett (020 8881 0550)

**Advertisement Design:**

Cathy Herron (01778 391167)

**Marketing Executive:**

Sarah Stephens (01778 395007)

**Office Manager:** Heather O'Connor

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

For all subscription enquiries please  
contact Warners Group Publications:  
01778 392027

(birdwatchsubs@warnersgroup.co.uk)



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#### ADVISORY PANEL

Tim Appleton MBE, Mike Fraser,  
Chris Harbard, Erik Hirschfeld,  
Stephen Moss, Killian Mullarney,  
Bill Oddie OBE, Hadoram Shirihai,  
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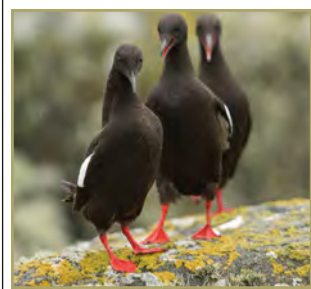
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BLACK GUILLEMOT BY BRYDON THOMASON (WWW.SHETLANDNATURE.NET)





BRYDON THOMASON (WWW.SHETLANDNATURE.NET)





## Taking the plunge

**T**he spectacle of a feeding flock of Northern Gannets has to be one of the greatest and most awe-inspiring wildlife scenes that it is possible to see off British coasts. It's not just the numbers that can be involved, but their exciting habit of diving from a great height (up to 45 m) and speed (up to 62 mph) into shoals of mackerel, herring or sprat, like a series of arrow-like air-to-sea missiles, sometimes plunging to depths of almost 15 m. Breeding birds are estimated to forage up to 400 miles from their nests at times, following the largest fish shoals, though ranging up to 100 miles is more usual.

In this extraordinary shot, we are privy to the birds flying and diving, contrasting the masses overhead with the intimacy of a single bird pursuing its prey. The image was taken offshore at Noss NNR, Shetland, from a boat using an underwater housing, held half-in, half-out of the water. The reserve is home to a teeming colony of Northern Gannets, Common Guillemots, Northern Fulmars and Kittiwakes every summer.

The gathering of gannets was encouraged by the presence of mackerel thrown overboard specifically to lure the birds in, but surely gives an accurate feel of what it must be like in an oceanic feeding frenzy of this pelagic species. ■



## FINDER'S REPORT

# America throws a curve-bill

**George Kinnard** promised himself he would find a mega-rarity before his 18th birthday, little believing that it would actually happen.

**Hudsonian Whimbrel:**  
Church Norton, West  
Sussex, 9 June-7 July 2015

**MAKING** the most of my time off college in recent months, birding has been very much on the agenda.

It's been a long-time ambition of mine to find a mega-rarity before I reach my 18th birthday, which is in December of this year. I never for one moment realistically thought I'd achieve my goal and assumed it'd be a box left unticked, but the element of surprise in birding surely is just one of the many reasons we are all so hooked.

Despite the recent prevailing westerlies pushing across the Atlantic resulting in Nearctic gems being found elsewhere, I still didn't anticipate what I was to discover coming from the same source on my local stretch of the West Sussex coast.

Mid-morning on 9 June, my grandfather and I arrived at Church Norton in the hope of connecting with any late spring overshoots. We were greeted by an empty car park,

so we took advantage of this and wasted no time in getting on with the birding.

The harbour initially seemed devoid of any wader activity – not unexpected given the time of year. However, as we approached the shingle bank to obtain a more extensive view, I noticed two Eurasian Whimbrels and a third *Numenius* apparently presenting no white 'V' on the upperparts take off, only to land a short distance away.

Realising that this indicated a potential Hudsonian Whimbrel, we continued further north to obtain closer views of the bird. I was instantly struck by the pale facial pattern and the contrast it presented between the dark lateral crown stripes and broad white supercilium. The large central crown stripe was also rather conspicuous, creating an Aquatic Warbler-like head pattern. The pronounced dark eyestripe and white demarcated throat also added to the bird's distinct appearance. Overall the body plumage was buffer and the upperparts less coarsely patterned when compared to the nearby Eurasian Whimbrel – we were fortunate that we were able to watch both species feeding side by side in close proximity.

After some time the



Hudsonian Whimbrel is a subtly distinctive form, with a much more strongly marked 'humbug' head pattern than Eurasian.

two Eurasians separated from the probable *hudsonicus*, heading across the mudflats towards our position, giving the closest views yet and allowing me to take some video footage and clear phone-scoped shots. By this point we were convinced we were looking at Sussex's first Hudsonian Whimbrel, but having no previous experience of this recent British

Ornithologists' Union split, and recalling that some eastern Eurasian Whimbrels can show limited white on the upperparts, I decided to phone a few others to solicit opinion. I also uploaded a few images onto Twitter.

This was shortly followed by a phone call from Josh Jones at BirdGuides asking if we had seen the bird's underwing pattern. As



With the British Ornithologists' Union splitting Hudsonian Whimbrel from Eurasian in 2011, the next bird was bound to prove popular, and became a long-stayer to many birders' relief.

IAN LYCETT



# A rare bunting by boat

**Bardsey Island's Cretzschmar's Bunting looked unobtainable at first, but then it stuck around. *Josh Jones* recounts the thrill of the chase when he twitched the bird by boat.**

I'd initially only had a brief rear view of the bird in low flight over the saltmarsh, it had not been possible to see the underwing so we decided to put the news out as a probable.

It was obvious that patience was required in order to gain a second flight view, and a tense wait finally came to an end when the bird lifted off, revealing the heavily barred, cinnamon-toned axillaries in distinct contrast to the much paler underwing coverts of Eurasian Whimbrel.

Now excitement really took hold, with events unfolding rapidly. I immediately contacted Josh to let him know that we had clinched the final feature, confirming identification beyond doubt.

Slowly but surely locals started to arrive, but unfortunately the bird had landed further into the harbour, secreting itself in vegetation and providing frustration for many, myself included! To make matters worse, four Eurasian Whimbrels were on view, presenting quite a tease to the assembling crowd. After all the excitement I realised how quickly my maths tuition was approaching so wished luck to the gathering observers and made my departure. I became quite anxious on the journey home, thinking it would not show other than when the rising tide pushed it out of the vegetation. However, to my relief I looked on Twitter to discover Luke Dray and Jake Gearty had captured some superb flight shots – success!

What a memorable morning's birding! My ambition to find a mega-rarity before my 18th was achieved, and it was a first for Sussex. The Selsey Peninsula has produced some fantastic rarities this year, and I know exactly where I'll be spending more of my time. ■

## STATS & FACTS

**First recorded:** Fair Isle, Shetland, 27-31 May 1955.

**Last recorded:** Yell, Shetland, 30 September-2 October 2013.

**Previous British records:** 8

**Previous Irish records:** 3  
**Mega rating:** ★★★★★



BEN PORTER (WWW.BENPORTERWILDLIFE.CO.UK)

**The Cretzschmar's Bunting doesn't look too out of place on the rocky habitat of Bardsey Island, and was kept viewable in the area by the provision of bird seed. An adult male, the bird's song should have been echoing around the mountain slopes of Greece or Turkey. It is the first British record away from Orkney or Fair Isle, Shetland.**

**Cretzschmar's Bunting: Bardsey Island, Gwynedd, 10-20 June 2015**

**EXTREMELY** elusive behaviour and less-than-straightforward access to its location meant that I didn't consider attempting to twitch the Cretzschmar's Bunting on Bardsey Island after the second sighting on Friday 12 June. With no sign throughout Saturday, that seemed a very good decision.

Despite the negative news, it always felt like we hadn't seen the last of that bird and so it proved. With news breaking that it had been seen again at the lighthouse compound early on Sunday and, crucially, for the first time lingering in one spot, a twitch suddenly seemed an altogether more realistic prospect.

After picking Brendan Glynn up from Watford we drove overnight to Porth Meudwy, from where the Bardsey boat departs, and arrived in the car park at around 4 am.

My plan had been to grab a few hours' kip, but birders were arriving all the time and walking down to the harbour, despite the first boat not leaving for more than three hours. Knowing the boat was small and operated on a first come, first served basis, there was no option but to tough it out and head down to secure a place in the queue.

By 7 am all the day's sailings were filled, and those arriving after 6 am were not due to get onto the island until mid-afternoon. Thankfully we'd managed to get ourselves on the second boat, which sailed at 8.30 am. I'd also managed a couple of hours' sleep and wasn't feeling too bad. No doubt a few others were in a worse state after even longer drives to the very tip of north-west Wales.

The crossing was fairly short and produced a range of the usual auks, including Puffins, as well as Manx Shearwaters. A quick march from the quay down to the lighthouse followed and, after exchanging greetings with warden Steve Stansfield, it was time to focus on the bunting. The wait wasn't long: the bird could be heard singing regularly and would occasionally sit up in the gorse surrounding the lighthouse compound, as well as visiting a specially seeded area within the

compound itself.

It must have been a little galling for those still queueing for their chance to get to Bardsey as we bowled back off the boat at Porth Meudwy quay at 11 am. The wait must have been long, tedious and a little nerve-wracking, too. Thankfully the bunting was showing quite regularly and, despite the lengthy wait for some, just about everyone went home happy with their views.

Tuesday inevitably drew a greater crowd after the bunting's performances on Sunday and Monday, by which time there were some legendary stories on the internet of birders roughing it at Porth Meudwy on Monday night to ensure a place on one of the day's boats! Fortunately a system was worked out by then to ensure birders could pre-book boats and not have to turn up at some ungodly hour – or even the previous evening!

The bunting showed well to all-comers until its final appearance on the evening of 20 June, by which point it had easily established itself as the most accessible Cretzschmar's Bunting ever recorded in Britain, and will certainly remain one of the year's highlights for many. ■

## STATS & FACTS

**First recorded:** Fair Isle, Shetland, 10-20 June 1967.

**Last recorded:** North Ronaldsay, Orkney, 19-21 September 2008 (though another from Fair Isle in April 2014 is pending).

**Previous British records:** 4  
**Mega rating:** ★★★★★



## FINDER'S REPORT

# Day tripper from the east



**Gary Howard** went camping with his family in the New Forest, not fully realising that a birder is never off duty and that his skills would be called into use even on a supposedly relaxed summer weekend.



**Above left:** the pale back and crown of this bird immediately raised suspicions that this was an individual of the eastern subspecies, *melanoleuca*, found from southern Italy east to the Middle East and Central Asia. **Above right:** the bird's strikingly pied appearance is even more apparent when perched; black-throated morphs occur in both subspecies, though the condition is more common in the eastern taxon.

## Black-eared Wheatear: Acres Down, Hampshire, 13 June 2015

**MY** wife Jenny and I made a rather last minute decision to spend a weekend camping in the New Forest, and on the evening of Friday 12 June packed the car ready for a reasonably early start. I said to her: "Let's start at Acres Down and see how we get on."

It was overcast and cool but dry when we arrived at Acres Down just after 9 am to find that we were the first car in the car park. We strolled to the viewpoint in no particular hurry, enjoying views of Tree Pipit and European Stonechat en route. We arrived to find a couple of birders, James Burge and Dave Knight, just settling down to start watching over the forest and we set ourselves up a few metres away. At around 10 am, another birder, Rob Clements, emerged from the forest on the south side and stood nearby.

While still scanning at about 10.30 am, I heard James Burge say something like: "Is that a shrike?" Looking to my right I could see a black-and-white bird on the

top of a pine, almost at eye level about 100 m away. I trained my scope on the bird and said: "No, it's a [Northern] Wheatear." Almost as soon as I said it, the bird dropped off the tree and I exclaimed: "It's not a [Northern] Wheatear, it's a Black-eared!"

I rushed to the edge of the hill but couldn't see anything, so I ran a few metres downhill to the base of the pines but still saw nothing. My wife and the other three birders appeared on the edge of the hill and I ran back up to discuss what had just happened. I pulled out my mobile phone and showed them the Black-eared Wheatear plate on the *Collins Bird Guide* app. This caused some confusion because the other guys felt it didn't look right, but I was the only one who got scope views and I was utterly convinced, having seen Black-eared Wheatear many times before across Europe and in the Middle East.

In a bit of a panic, I said I was off to relocate it and I dashed off down the slope. I knew I'd 'found' a mega and it was slipping out of my grip – without even a record shot I feared it would become another 'one that got away'.

I worked my way slowly and methodically around the base of the hill, and after what seemed like an eternity but was in fact

20 minutes, I saw the bird again. As I reached for my camera it flew away towards a large group of pines at the foot of the hill and out of sight.

Jenny, who was now trying to cope with keeping twin 11-year-old boys in sight and carrying my scope while shadowing me, saw me give the thumbs up and went back up to tell the other three who were still on the hill. A few minutes later I picked it up on open ground among the Bog Cotton and took some photos before it all too quickly flicked away out of sight again. What a bird! I could scarcely believe it. I was elated, but also now a little more relaxed.

I was anxious to get the news out so using my phone I photographed a screen image on the back of my camera, though when I attempted to tweet the news out found that I had no signal. The bird reappeared and we all got a good, long look before it flew out of sight once more. Rob remained a little cautious and questioned the ID, but I said that I was happy it was a Black-eared Wheatear and that it looked to me to be the eastern form. I dashed off up the slope, eventually got a signal and tweeted it out and then called the news services to ensure the widest possible audience.

I set off again to search for it, but was starting to get a bit desperate after another 30 minutes passed without a glimpse, and the first twitchers arrived on the scene. Luckily I refound the bird on an area of gently undulating ground immediately west of the hill, and got the first few people onto it.

The weather was now sunny and bright and the bird showed well, if at times a bit distantly, feeding on the ground but frequently flying up into trees. With the crowd building and my family now hoping for some lunch, we wandered slowly back to the car. This was an amazing morning's birding, but certainly nothing like what I was expecting to see in summer in the middle of the New Forest! ■

## STATS & FACTS

**First recorded:** Radcliffe Reservoir, Greater Manchester, c 8 May 1875.

**Last recorded:** Frampton Marsh RSPB, Lincs, 12 June 2012.

**Previous British records:** 58

**Previous Irish records:** 5

**Mega rating:** ★★★★★



FINDER'S REPORT

# Waxwing quickly wanes

**Maggie Tucker** thought she'd seen a Waxwing in her garden; it was, but of a particularly rare kind.



**Cedar Waxwing: St Mary's, Scilly, 19 June 2015**

An adult in spring – like the above on St Mary's – has only occurred once before, and that was the very first record on Shetland in 1985, which was also a June bird.

I enjoy having a bird-friendly garden and just outside my kitchen window I have a very fine Bramley apple tree. This tree is in almost constant use by the local bird population and I love to watch them. There are the usual sparrows, finches and tits, and even a tiny Goldcrest on occasions, but the bird I saw with the yellow tail-tip was something very special.

It was the tail feathers I saw first, and as it turned I saw the red bars on the wings, the pale breast, finally the crest and the face. I had no idea what it was, but I did have a book which could tell me: a Waxwing, I decided.

Thinking Scilly birder Will Wagstaff – a friend of ours – might like to see it, I suggested to my husband Grant that he give him a call, but Will wasn't at home. Our neighbour Nigel Hudson is also a keen birder, so Grant asked him if he had Will's mobile number and we told him that I had just seen a Waxwing in the garden.

Nigel literally dropped what he was carrying and fled home for his binoculars. He phoned others, and along with Kris 'Spider' Webb entered the back of my garden and both saw the bird. Spider identified it as a Cedar Waxwing and photographs were quickly taken

as it fluttered from branch to branch in the tree, pecking at the flowers and clusters of tiny apples. Well, never mind – the tree over-fruiting anyway ... It flew away briefly but returned for a while, before disappearing across the moors for about 20 minutes or so.

Quite a few birders came down during the course of the day and we took a collection for the Cornwall Air Ambulance. However, the bird didn't reappear and I'm sorry to say that they were all disappointed. I keep looking out for it, though, and will keep my promise to tell them if it comes back. ■

• **There were two more sightings of this species this June, in a spring that has produced an extraordinary number of American vagrants. Birds were reported at Kilrush, Co Clare, on 3-4th and on Tiree, Argyll, on 10th.**

## STATS & FACTS

**First recorded:** Noss, Shetland, 25-26 June 1985.

**Last recorded:** Tiree, Argyll, 21-29 September 2013.

**Previous British records:** 3

**Previous Irish records:** 2

**Mega rating:** ★★★★★

FINDER'S REPORT

# Raising an Eyebrowed



**Carolyn Simpson's** rare garden thrush had moved on by the time it was properly identified.

**Eyebrowed Thrush: Whalsay, Shetland, 20-21 June 2015**



The Eyebrowed Thrush could be safely sexed as a female, as even a young male would by now have a mainly grey throat. Most records to date have been unsexed first-winters.

**JUST** after I had lunch on Saturday 20 June, I looked out of my garden window to see if the day had improved as I was planning to go out and set in some flowers I had grown from seed in my greenhouse which were ready to be planted.

I saw a bird hopping around which looked very different from anything I had seen before. I said to my husband come and look at this bird, but it immediately took flight. I got my camera, though, and put it nearby in case the bird returned. Not having much knowledge of birds, I do like to have a photo.

Fortunately, it came back a few minutes later and I was able to take three photos of it through the window to compare to the illustrations in my copy of the Reader's Digest *Birds Of Britain*.

After poring through the book, I could not find anything that looked like it, so I went out and started to plant out my flowers. I did see it a couple of times more but got on with what I was doing.

The next day I went into my neighbour's house to see if the bird in the images was in their bird book, but again it wasn't. They suggested we phone Jon

Dunn, a friend of theirs who lives on Whalsay and is an avid birdwatcher. He came right away and when I showed him the pictures he got very excited indeed and phoned John Lowrie Irvine, another birder, and they confirmed it was a very rare bird: an Eyebrowed Thrush.

They phoned to let other birders know and several arrived by ferry soon after. I showed them the pictures and they all set off to try to find the bird again, but to no avail.

Shetland has its fair share of gales and poor summers, but birds seem to be very happy to visit the shrubs, hedges and trees in my garden, and I have seen quite a few over the years. I think in future I will be taking more interest in trying to identify them sooner rather than later! ■

## STATS & FACTS

**First recorded:** Oundle, Northamptonshire, 5 October 1964.

**Last recorded:** North Ronaldsay, Orkney, 30 September 2014.

**Previous British records:** 20

**Mega rating:** ★★★★★



## FINDER'S REPORT

# Irish garden junco



**Derek Scott's** offshore Irish back garden has become notorious for attracting vagrants, and its fortunate position on the Atlantic coast struck again this summer with a rare American bunting.

**THE** first 10 days of June almost invariably produce a good bird on Dursey Island, with European Bee-eater, Short-toed Lark, Golden Oriole, Arctic Redpoll, Common Rosefinch and Rustic Bunting all having occurred. So my wife Joanna and I returned to our little cottage near the west end of the island on 1 June in eager anticipation.

However, the first six days were very disappointing, with cold westerly winds and nothing except for a few Great Northern Divers passing at sea. The 7th and 8th were much better days, with light north-easterly winds and warmer temperatures, and the arrival of a few Collared Doves and House Martins indicated that some birds were on the move. But this was hardly preparation for the events of 9th.

At 8.50 am, as I was stocking the bird table in our top garden, I heard an

VICTOR CASCHERA

**Dark-eyed Junco: Dursey Island, Co Cork, 9 June 2015**



**Dark-eyed Juncos are garden birds in the United States, too, and so this individual would probably have felt at home for the short time it paused on its misdirected northward journey.**

unusual song – a short trill on an even pitch – and looking up at the trees at the back of the garden, I quickly spotted the bird sitting in full view in a conifer. As soon as I had it in my binoculars, I could see that it was a male 'Slate-coloured Junco', one of the eastern forms of Dark-eyed Junco.

I rushed into the house to summon my wife and get my camera, and within seconds we were back in the garden. The bird had disappeared from its perch, but much to our delight was

now feeding on our bird table. We managed to get a few hasty record shots, but then it flew off about 100 m to a ruined house on the hillside above and proceeded to sing from a chimney pot. Birds leaving our garden often fly up to the house above before heading off north-east along the island, and we suspected that it was about to depart.

However, when it did take off, it flew straight back down to our bird table. More photos were taken, and then at 9.10 am, I telephoned Kieran Grace – a Dursey Island regular

and friend of long standing – and the news was out.

The junco visited the bird table on several occasions over the next hour, but we then had to leave as we had things to do in Castletownbere. The cable car connecting Dursey to the mainland was still operating on its winter timetable and there was no service between 11 am and 2.30 pm, so we had plenty of time to do our shopping and be back at the cable car for the first afternoon run.

By then, there were 17 birders queuing up to get onto the island. As 'islanders', we were able to jump the queue and were back at our house by 3 pm. Happily, two of the islanders provided an informal taxi service and by 3.25 pm the first birders were arriving on the scene. They only had to wait five minutes before the bird popped up in a patch of willows and thereafter it showed well and regularly on our bird table for the rest of the day.

All the visiting birders had great views of the bird, and it was still feeding happily on the bird table at 9.20 pm, long after they had left. However, it was a fine clear night and by 6 am the next morning, the bird had gone. The 10 birders who came on 10th were sadly disappointed, their only consolation being a male Red-backed Shrike, a Lesser Whitethroat and a Striped Hawk-moth! ■

## STATS & FACTS

### First recorded:

Dungeness, Kent, 26 May 1960.

**Last recorded:** Beaulieu, Hampshire, 24 December 2011-February 2012.

**Previous British records:** 38 (though two more are pending, including last month's bird at Toab, Shetland).

**Previous Irish records:** 3

**Mega rating:** ★★★★★

The lucky few who managed to get across to Dursey Island for the bird were presented with a magical spring scene: a male Dark-eyed Junco singing its heart out in the vain hope of attracting a mate.

DEREK SCOTT





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Rarities: June 2015

# Yank arrivals continue



**Josh Jones** details a month in which it seemed that the influx of American vagrants more usually associated with autumn just wouldn't let up.



GARY WESTLEY

Continuing May's theme, June delivered a list of high-quality vagrants more expected at peak time in autumn rather than the crossover period between late spring and early summer.

Highlights came thick and fast early on, with Britain's first-ever spring Swainson's Thrush extracted from a mistnet on Skokholm Island, Pembrokeshire, on 2nd (see last month, pages 8-10). Despite the often clear and settled weather the bird went on to register a nine-day stay in the island's only garden and, thanks to the open-mindedness and patience of warden Richard Brown, became the subject of the

island's first large-scale twitch – hopefully the first of many to this beautiful Welsh island.

The Veery found on North Ronaldsay, Orkney, at the end of May also put in a lengthy stay as it lingered well into June, last being seen on 9th (see also pages 8-10 last month). And, with another Swainson's found at Houbie, Fetlar, Shetland, on 16th, spring 2015 was nothing short of extraordinary for *Catharus* thrush occurrences.

## Cedar of St Mary's

It wasn't just thrushes, though, and a convincing description of a waxwing seen by a non-birder at Rosehill on St Mary's, Scilly,

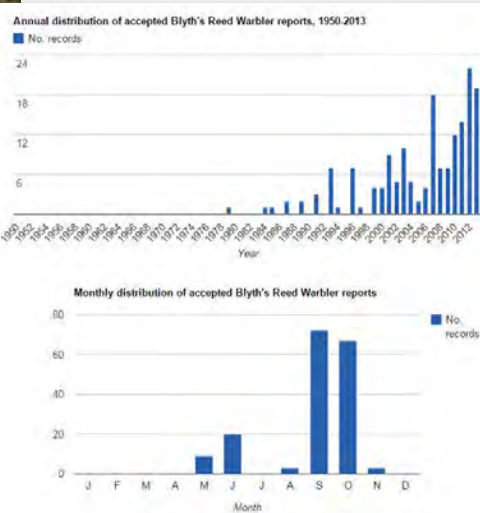
on 2nd was the precursor to an unprecedented run of Cedar Waxwing records in June (see pages 10-11). Just a day after the Scilly report, a bird was seen and photographed near Kilrush, Co Clare. It lingered to 4th but was unfortunately not identified and reported widely until 13th, by which time it was long gone and there had been another record – this time from Argyll. Again that bird was seen and photographed but its appearance at Scarinish, Tiree, lasted all of a few minutes before it disappeared. Tiree was the site of the last British record back in September 2013. The amazing run was then continued when a

bird was found in gardens at Old Town on St Mary's on 19th; again, it showed only briefly and had vanished just a couple of hours after its initial appearance late morning. The close proximity to the description from 2nd suggests that both reports could well relate to one long-staying but frighteningly elusive bird, but it seems we'll never know for sure.

Dark-eyed Junco may be a near-annual fixture in Britain, but in Ireland it remains extremely rare with just three records, the last of which was in Co Antrim in 2004. In fact, before this June, there had never been a truly twitchable individual. While the



DAVID HATTON



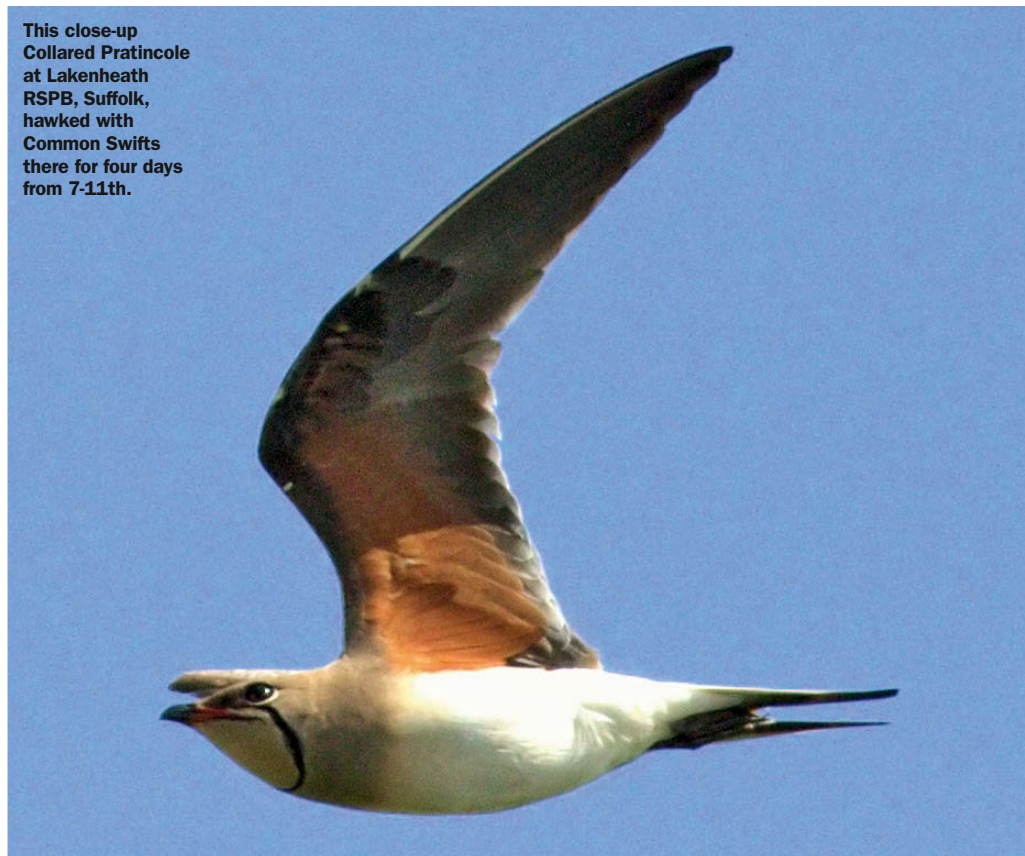
**Blyth's Reed Warblers are now expected in early summer and often sing, and this bird at Blakeney Point, Norfolk, on 14th was one of four seen in June. The radical increase in occurrences this century can be seen on the top histogram from BirdGuides.com, while the bias of records to the autumn can be seen below. Birds on their spring migration are still more likely to be seen in June than May, largely because they are late migrants to northern Europe.**



This Laughing Gull, photographed on 14th at Salthouse, Norfolk, followed two fly-past sightings at Cley and Blakeney earlier that day.



This close-up Collared Pratincole at Lakenheath RSPB, Suffolk, hawked with Common Swifts there for four days from 7-11th.



NEIL ROLPH

male in Scott's Garden on Dursley Island, Co Cork, on 9th may have lingered for just a day, the long hours of daylight in June allowed enough time for it to be twitched from as far as Dublin (see page 12). A convincing description of another junco was received from Treen, Cornwall, where a bird was present on 13-14th.

Beyond the passerines, Britain's ninth Hudsonian Whimbrel was a fantastic find at Pagham Harbour, West Sussex, on 9th (see pages 8-9). Lingered throughout the month, it became the first mainland individual to be truly twitchable since the British Ornithologists' Union announced

the species' split from Eurasian Whimbrel in September 2011, and thus this bird proved an extremely popular fixture. Its occurrence strongly mirrors the arrival of a bird at Walney Island, Cumbria, in June 2007 which went on to spend more than two months in the area. The whimbrel was joined by a Terek Sandpiper on 21-22nd, treating fortunate visitors to an impressive double act from two very different parts of the world.

#### Gift from the east

June's highlights were not solely Nearctic in origin – in fact what was arguably the month's headline bird was actually a visitor from south-

east Europe. Though Cretzschmar's Bunting has occurred a couple of times on the Northern Isles in recent years, the wait for a more accessible bird was only put to an end this June when a stunning male arrived on Bardsey Island, Gwynedd (see page 9). Initially it proved extremely difficult to pin down, being seen only very briefly on 10th and 12th despite extensive searching. Happily things took a turn for the better on 14th when the bird became more reliable around the island's lighthouse and, thanks the quick thinking of warden Steve Stansfield and team, a patch of seed was laid out within the compound. The bird

went on to visit this area regularly for the next six days and, rather like Skokholm earlier in the month, Bardsey experienced its first-ever large-scale twitch, with almost everyone leaving having enjoyed great views and many even being treated to the bird singing.

Present for just a day, the male Eastern Black-eared Wheatear at Acres Down, Hampshire, on 13th will constitute many birders' highlight of the month (see page 10). Though one lingered on Scilly for several days in October 2010, a twitchable mainland Black-eared Wheatear was long overdue – this is the first since a male at Porthgwarra in March



SULA RIEDLINGER

A cracking male Black-headed Bunting showed up on Skomer Island, Pembrokeshire, on 8th, and was first sighted by the photographer's "eagle-eyed" sister, Fiona McKinnon, while a gale raged across the island.



STEVE DUFFIELD (WWW.HEBRIDEANBIRDTOURS.CO.UK)

This male 'subalpine warbler' at Balranald RSPB on North Uist, Outer Hebrides, on 4 June was described as being very interesting by many, and certainly looks a good candidate for Moltoni's Warbler.





ROGER RIDLEY

A useful comparison shot of an adult Bonaparte's Gull (centre) with two first-summer Black-headed Gulls at Skaw, Shetland, this June; three were logged in Britain during the month. Inset: Gull-billed Terns were consecutively reported from Nottinghamshire, Old Moor RSPB, South Yorkshire (where this image was captured), Orkney, Cornwall, Ceredigion and Cheshire, but probably only involved two roving individuals.

2002! Incidentally, this bird appears to be the male recorded in The Netherlands on 10th, roughly 280 miles east-north-east of Acres Down.

The Black-winged Pratincole remained at Bothal Pond, Northumbs, on the first day of the month only, but was relocated at Loch of Skene, Aberdeens, on 3rd, where it lingered just about long enough to be twitched. To compliment it, a Collared Pratincole was found at Lakenheath Fen, Suffolk, on 7th and stayed until 11th.

A Long-billed Dowitcher was at The Cull, Co Wexford, on 12th before relocating to nearby Tacumshin on 14th; what was presumably the same individual was again at its original location on 28th. Hampshire's Greater Yellowlegs showed no sign of

leaving its adopted home of Titchfield Haven, and was still there to the end of the month, by which point it had notched up 170 days since its first appearance back in January. Rare shorebirds were further represented by a Broad-billed Sandpiper at Frampton Marsh, Lincs, from 9-12th and a Pacific Golden Plover at Breydon Water, Norfolk, from 28th.

### Wandering terns

Reported almost exclusively from the winter months in the past, what is presumably the same long-staying Forster's Tern in Galway Bay was at Fiddaun Island on 5th. Whiskered Terns were brief visitors to Bank Island, North Yorks, on 13th and Minsmere, Suffolk, on 24th, while a Gull-billed Tern at Idle Valley, Notts, on 11th was presumably the bird seen in South

Yorkshire's Dearne Valley on 16th; another was at Birsay, Orkney, from 20-22nd.

A beautiful adult Bonaparte's Gull graced Unst, Shetland, on 11th and a first-summer lingered on St Kilda, Outer Hebrides, where there was also a first-summer American Herring Gull for a few days until 13th, when it became the meal of a local Great Skua. Another adult Bonaparte's was at Oare Marshes, Kent, from 20th and is presumably the returning bird first seen there in summer 2013. After two brief appearances in the Spurn area in the early morning of 13th and 14th, a near-adult Laughing Gull flew along the coast at Cley and Blakeney Point, Norfolk, during the afternoon of the latter date. It was also seen briefly at nearby Salthouse duckpond before its coastal fly-by. An adult Franklin's Gull at Rusheen Bay, Co Galway, on 13th may well have been that at Lough Beg, Co Londonderry, from 22nd.

Following the departure of the Scilly Squacco Heron on 3rd, a bird turned up at Marazion, Cornwall, from 6-10th. Another was at Saltholme, Co Durham, on 18th and 26th, with what was possibly the same then appearing at Kirkby-on-Bain Pits, Lincs, on 27th. Birders searching for the Squacco at Kirkby on 28th found a Little Bittern in exactly the same spot! The bittern was one of three in June, with the male still

'barking' at Lakenheath, Suffolk, to 26th; another was found dead on Scilly mid-month.

Following a male on Skomer on 7th, another male Black-headed Bunting was found in a garden at Saundersfoot, Pems, on 10th; unfortunately neither lingered long enough to be twitched.

Blakeney Point did well mid-month with a four-day Paddyfield Warbler from 11th and a Blyth's Reed Warbler on 13-14th; further Blyth's Reeds sang at Holland Haven, Essex, on 12th and Inverurie, Aberdeens, from 24-27th, while another was on Fair Isle on 8th. A Great Reed Warbler lingered on Unst from 3-22nd. Meanwhile on North Uist, what looked a very good candidate for a male Moltoni's Warbler was photographed at Balranald on 4th. ■

• For full details of all June's sightings, go to [www.birdguides.com](http://www.birdguides.com). To receive free illustrated weekly sightings summaries and other news, sign up at [bit.ly/BGWeeklyNews](http://bit.ly/BGWeeklyNews).

**BIRDCUIDES** 



IAN CURRAN

Birders looking for the Hudsonian Whimbrel at Pagham Harbour, West Sussex, lucked onto this Terek Sandpiper, which was present on 21-22nd, and may be the bird which subsequently pitched up in Northumberland in early July.

RICHARD WILLISON



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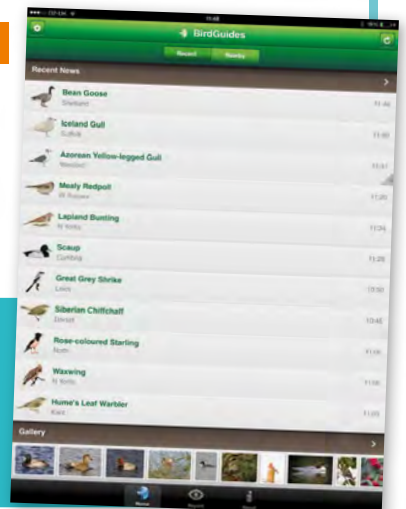
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Scarcities: June 2015

# Invasion of the bee-snatchers



**Josh Jones** tells the story of an active month which included ongoing European Bee-eater and Red-necked Phalarope influxes.



KRIS WEBB

One of the stand-out birds of the month – and one that really ought to qualify for the rarity round-up in such an infrequently seen plumage – was a stunning female Grey Phalarope in full summer glory at Brandon Marsh, Warks, on 2nd. Unfortunately its stay was all too brief; after being found late morning, it stayed only until late afternoon when almost continuous harassment from gulls forced it to leave. For those that got there in time, though, it's a bird that will live long in the memory.

The Grey Phalarope came among an ongoing influx of Red-necked Phalaropes across Britain. Birds were reported from an impressive 58 sites nationwide. Among these were some great local records, including Skokholm's first-ever record of the species: two birds on the northern pond on 9th. One at Langford Lowfields on 9-10th was the second seen in Nottinghamshire this spring. Two were at Blashford Lakes, Hants, on 2nd after presumably the same pair was seen flying through Mudeford Quay, Dorset, earlier in the day. The only Irish record came from Broad Lough, Co Wicklow, on 7th.

**Above:** an influx of European Bee-eaters continued throughout the month, providing views like this flock on St Agnes, Scilly, on 8th. **Inset:** the BirdGuides.com map shows the full extent of the invasion which, despite its southern and eastern bias, even reached the north of Shetland.



BRYDON THOMSON (WWW.SHETLANDNATURE.NET)

**Golden Oriole** is now virtually lost as a breeding bird in Britain, and has become a very scarce migrant. This female at Halligarth, Unst, Shetland, on 8th was one of around 20 seen in the country.

## Quiet on the sea

The same inclement conditions that brought the Grey Phalarope were also behind a good movement of European Storm-petrels, with respectable counts for early June noted from the south-west of England and south Wales on 1st and 2nd. Seawatching was otherwise fairly quiet, with skua passage all but over by the beginning of June; a small build-up of lingering Pomarine Skuas off Flamborough Head was notable mid-month, while the first Cory's Shearwaters of the summer were seen right at the end of June.

A fair selection of scarce wildfowl was on offer for early summer, with the drake Ring-necked Duck at Blacktoft Sands, East Yorks, from 11th a great bonus bird for those visiting the nesting Montagu's Harriers. Further drakes included two on Shetland and another on Orkney. Drake American Wigeon remained at two East Yorkshire sites early in the month, with one of these perhaps responsible for sightings at Boldon Flats, Co Durham, from 26th. A female was at Riggfa Pool, Aberdeens, from 7th, while a drake was in the same county at Loch of Strathbeg on 7th.





Despite its occurrence in autumn and winter in small numbers, breeding-plumaged Grey Phalarope is very much a rarity. This fine specimen was sketched and painted at Brandon Marsh, Warwickshire, on 2nd.

Another drone was on Tresco, Scilly, throughout, with a further report from South Uist on 20th. Green-winged Teal were reported from Derbyshire, North Yorkshire, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides.

A female Surf Scoter was off the traditional stretch of Aberdeenshire coastline from 1-4th, while a drone flew north past Long Nab, North Yorks, on 23rd amid a strong passage of Common Scoter that was noted along the east coast as far south as Norfolk. As well as a lingering bird off Esha Ness, Shetland, a White-billed Diver photographed at sea off Troon, Ayrshire, on 9th was a significant record.

An impressive 18 Great Egrets counted at Ham Wall, Somerset, at dawn on 18th are an indicator of the rude health of this burgeoning population; other counts included four at Scotney GP Kent, on 18th and three past Ilfracombe, Devon, on 22nd. A Glossy Ibis was again in Co Waterford and at least one Night Heron was seen sporadically on the Somerset Levels, with further records of the latter species coming from Scilly and Staffordshire. As well as a long-staying bird on Scilly, a first-summer Purple Heron entertained at Kenfig Pool, Glam,

from 19-23rd.

Early summer Red Kite movements have become the norm in recent years, with many parts of the South-West recording big counts. However, all previous records were eclipsed when an astonishing minimum of 186 flew over Nanjizal, Cornwall, on 8th, followed by 166 over Nanquidno the next morning in addition to a host of smaller counts from the west of the county that day. A total of 51 then passed over Ramsey Island, Pembro, on 9th, suggesting birds were re-routing back to Welsh populations.

A couple of White-rumped Sandpipers included the lingering bird at Frampton Marsh, Lincs, to 12th and another at Cley, Norfolk, from 12-21st. Pectoral Sandpipers in Co Waterford, Orkney and the Outer Hebrides in the first week of the month were presumably still northbound, but the bird at Slimbridge, Glos, from 27th could easily be a failed breeder already making its way south. Ten Temminck's Stints were noted, but the month's only Kentish Plover was at Ynyslas, Ceredigion, on 5th.

Unusually for spring, a White-winged Black Tern lingered at Swineham GP Dorset, from 2-4th and represents the third site record

STEPH THORPE



MARK SULLIVAN

The month's second most noteworthy influx (after European Bee-eater) was Red-necked Phalarope. This bird was on a farm pool near Tarland, Aberdeenshire, on 20 June, and was one of at least 34 logged in Britain and Ireland. Inset: the BirdGuides.com map illustrates a somewhat inland skewing of the month's records, exemplified by the Aberdeenshire bird. Some were noted travelling as pairs, but most were lone individuals.





RON DEMAINE

Two Cotgrave, Nottinghamshire, householders had a pleasant surprise in their garden on 18th, as they prepared to twitch the Cretzchmar's Bunting on Bardsey Island – a Rose-coloured Starling! The bird was gone on their return.

in as many years. Another was at Blithfield Res, Staffs, on 15th, while a bird flying past Whitburn, Co Durham, early on 28th was presumably the bird showing well at Saltholme RSPB the following day. Long-staying first-summer Ring-billed Gulls remained in Cornwall and Co Kerry throughout the month, while a second-summer was on Barra on 20th.

June proved to be fantastic for European Bee-eaters. Throughout the month there were several reports of double-figure flocks, although the chances that many of these records related to the same wandering birds must be high. The month started with a dozen touring Scilly on 8-9th, groups of six over Chamber's Farm Wood, Lincs, and at Woolley, Somerset, and five on the Yorkshire coast on 6th, while several roaming birds in Cornwall included a flock of four. East Yorkshire fared well with five over Sammy's Point on 10th followed by 11 south over Bempton Cliffs on 16th. Up to five were on Barra, Outer Hebrides, for several days from 17th. Ten over Minsmere, Suffolk, on 19th were followed by

another 10 that roosted overnight at Glynde, East Sussex, on 22-23rd. Presumably the same birds were over Dungeness on 25th, with eight over Marks Tey, Essex, on 26th and seven in Kent on 27th. Several further reports of multiple birds included five over Potter Heigham, Norfolk, on 28th.

#### Warblers trickle in

A singing *Hippolais* near Hampton in Arden, West Mids, on 11th quickly transpired to be the county's first Melodious Warbler. Somewhat atypically for a species that is so often difficult to catch up with on British soil, it proved delightfully confiding as it held territory until the end of the month, allowing many birders their first opportunity to witness the species singing in Britain. Another was heard singing on private land at Sennybridge, Powys, on 21st, while a third was briefly at Portland Bill on 16th.

Several Marsh Warblers were also reported, with a bird holding territory at Narborough, Norfolk, easily the most popular over its two-week stay from 9th; other notable records included



ANDY HOOD

Greenish Warbler is somewhat scarcer in spring than autumn, and this individual in a private garden at Flamborough Head, East Yorkshire, on 15th was among 13 noted during the month.

songsters in Hertfordshire, Shropshire and East Yorkshire, in addition to a continuing trickle of migrants in the Northern Isles that included two on North Ronaldsay on 20th. Early in the month a singing Icterine Warbler spent a few days at Crathie, Aberdeenshire, while two more were recorded in Highland; a singing male at Reculver, Kent, from 28th was also a good record, while a handful of migrants were reported from the Northern Isles in the first half of the month.

A small arrival of Greenish Warblers in the first 10 days of June saw seven arrive across the Shetland archipelago (including two on Fair Isle), as well as one apiece on Orkney and Scilly. Another was on Blakeney Point, Norfolk, on 11th with Skomer, Pembro, claiming one on 12th and Flamborough Head, East Yorks, hosting a singing male briefly on 15th.

A minimum of 25 Red-backed Shrikes was reported in June, the vast majority of which were on the Northern Isles. Along the east coast, birds were noted in

Northumberland, East Yorkshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, while three were in Kent and another was in East Sussex. The joker in the pack was a male on Dursey Island, Co Cork, on 10th.

Red-breasted Flycatchers were at Bardsey Island, Gwynedd, on 5th and Portland Bill, Dorset, on 21st, while Short-toed Larks were on Scilly and in Norfolk on 9th and 10th respectively. A meagre showing of Rose-coloured Starlings saw just seven reported, including a bird well inland at Cotgrave, Notts, on 18th.

A male European Serin was a surprise at Leasowe, Cheshire, on 26th, with more typical records coming from Dorset and Kent. Around 20 Common Rosefinches showed much less of an easterly bias to the spread of records and several territorial birds were found. A brown male sang for over a week at Radipole Lake, Dorset, from 6th, while at least three were in Highland and another was in Ambleside, Cumbria, on 13-14th. ■

BIRDBUIDES 

JIM NICOLSON

White-billed Diver numbers tend to radically decline come early summer, but the few that do turn up – like this bird at Eshaness, Shetland, on 15th – are usually resplendent in breeding plumage, or almost so in this bird's case.



ANDY HOOD

Temminck's Stints were still arriving well into June, and this confiding bird at Flamborough Head on 16th was one of nine in Britain, most of which occurred in the last half of the month.



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Western Palearctic: June 2015

# Israel's bird of prey banquet

Though mid-summer is traditionally quiet, some mouthwatering rarities were still to be found in the region, says *Josh Jones*, particularly among the raptors.



The first Lappet-faced Vulture for Israel since 2001 was at Carmel Hal Bar from 14-23rd, and it sparked a major national twitch.

June proved to be another productive month around the Western Palearctic, not least for what is now the most easily accessible Bateleur to ever grace the region. Present near Gal'on on Israel's Judean plains, the bird lingered throughout June to at least 27th and was successfully

twitched by birders from Britain, France and Belgium, among others.

Another hugely significant Israeli record concerned an immature Lappet-faced Vulture – the first seen in the country since 2001 – at the Carmel Hai Bar reserve, south of Haifa, from 14-23rd. Unfortunately the bird had to be taken into care on the latter date as it was weak and severely underweight; it will be kept for a breeding

programme there.

Israel also celebrated its first breeding record of Black Bush Robin, with two pairs successfully raising young in the south of the country this spring. Even more impressive was the rediscovery of Pallid Scops Owl as a breeding species, 104 years after the last recorded occurrence. With no fewer than 22 territories found in suitable habitat around the Dead Sea, it's fair to



**Above:** Israel's Bateleur remained available to birders for most of the month, enabling some intimate shots at times.

**Below:** though elusive at times and disappearing for days at a stretch, Germany's Black-browed Albatross was very accommodating in the Northern Gannet colony on Heligoland when it was present.



EZRA HADAD

EZRA HADAD

VOLKER CONRAD





This male Oriental Cuckoo was found singing at Sotkamo, Finland, on 14th, and caught and ringed. Here, the diagnostic white underwing bar is being displayed for the cameras.

RONI VÄISÄNEN

say that they've probably been there all along.

A massively significant European record was a singing male Oriental Cuckoo at Sotkamo, Finland, from 14th until the end of the month. As well as being sound-recorded, the bird was trapped and ringed and, with identification beyond doubt, looks set to become the first national record. Other great Finnish records included a male Cretschmar's Bunting at Ulkokorunni on 18th and the nation's fourth Blue-cheeked Bee-eater at Pöytyä on 19th, albeit belatedly identified from photographs.

Norway's fourth White-winged Lark was at Båtsfjord, Finnmark, on 17th and a Lesser Sand Plover was at Farsund on 26th. In Sweden what is presumably the returning Pacific Swift was at Hedemora, Dalarna, on 7th, the same site hosting a White-tailed Lapwing both that day and the following. An Alpine Chough showing well in gardens in Halmstad, Halland, on 25-26th was a perplexing report to say the least; though showing no signs of confinement, the absurdity of the record will surely see it placed in Category D. Neighbouring Denmark harboured its second Marmora's Warbler – a singing male – at Skagen on 4th, remarkably found in the same

place as the first, and by the same observer!

Iceland had a fairly quiet month although a pristine adult White-winged Black Tern reached Skoruvík on 5th and the regular drake American White-winged Scoter was again at Keflavík.

The Black-browed Albatross was seen at its favoured cliffs on Heligoland, Germany, on and off to 20th, while a male Spectacled Warbler at Feldberg, Baden-Württemberg, from 7-10th was a national fourth. Neighbouring Poland hosted just its second Black-headed Bunting on 4th as well as a Sociable Lapwing near Łódź the previous day.

An Eastern Black-eared Wheatear at Noordwijk, Zuid-Holland, on 10th then popped up in Hampshire a few days later (see page 10). Elsewhere in The Netherlands, a distinctive Black Guillemot of the Arctic subspecies *mandtii* was a surprise find in a small harbour near Kamperland, Zeeland, on 27th. Griffon Vulture records included 25 roosting overnight near Wommels, Friesland, on 4-5th followed by further sightings of small groups around the country over the next 48 hours, including two over central Amsterdam. At least 33 Griffon Vultures were later seen over Uddel, Gelderland, on 29th – no doubt a portion of the impressive

47 seen over Geel, Belgium, on 27th. That country's star bird, however, was its first Moustached Warbler, trapped near Pepingen, Vlaams-Brabant, on 7th and found to be sporting a French ring.

Reflecting the record-breaking counts in south-west England, two Red Kites made it to the Azores on 16th – one on Terceira and another as far west as Corvo. A Blue-cheeked Bee-eater was a brief visitor to Llobregat Delta near Barcelona, Spain, on 6th, while at Western Reef Heron was reported from Parma, Italy, on 15th. Four Ruppell's Vultures at Jbel Moussa, Morocco, on 10th were readying themselves to cross the Strait of Gibraltar and are a continuance of the growing annual increase in records from this area. ■

**BIRDBUIDES** 



For the second year running, Pacific Swift was recorded in Sweden, and seems very likely to be a returning bird.

JOAKIM DJERF



PIM WOLF

With a potential bird in Cumbria disproven last year, it was down to the Dutch to provide a bona fide *mandtii* Black Guillemot from the Arctic, with strikingly more white on its wings than nominate.





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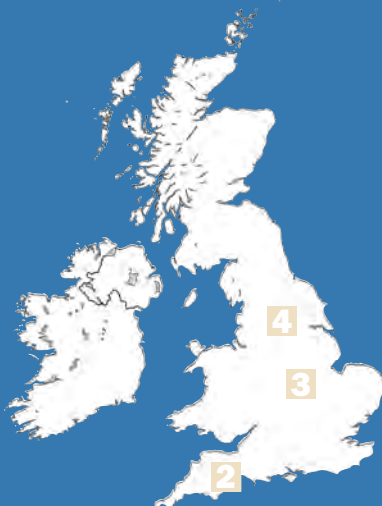
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Where  
to watch  
birds

1



- 1** Unst, Shetland.  
Pages 25-27
- 2** Bowling Green Marsh, Devon.  
Page 28
- 3** Rutland Water, Leicestershire.  
Page 29
- 4** Fairburn Ings, North Yorkshire.  
Page 30

## MORE AUGUST SITES

- Camel Estuary, Cornwall: [bit.ly/bw230CamelEstuary](http://bit.ly/bw230CamelEstuary)
- Cresswell and Warkworth Lane Ponds, Northumberland: [bit.ly/bw254CreswellWarkworth](http://bit.ly/bw254CreswellWarkworth)
- Dee Estuary, Cheshire: [bit.ly/bw230DeeEstuary](http://bit.ly/bw230DeeEstuary)
- Inverness, Highland: [bit.ly/bw230Inverness](http://bit.ly/bw230Inverness)
- Lincolnshire Wash: [bit.ly/bw218LincsWash](http://bit.ly/bw218LincsWash)
- Lune Estuary, Lancashire: [bit.ly/bw242LuneEstuary](http://bit.ly/bw242LuneEstuary)
- Mersea Island, Essex: [bit.ly/bw230MerseaIsland](http://bit.ly/bw230MerseaIsland)
- Old Hall Marshes, Essex: [bit.ly/bw218OldHall](http://bit.ly/bw218OldHall)
- Red Rocks, Cheshire: [bit.ly/bw254RedRocks](http://bit.ly/bw254RedRocks)
- Start Point, Devon: [bit.ly/bw242StartPoint](http://bit.ly/bw242StartPoint)
- Strumble Head, Pembrokeshire: [bit.ly/bw242StrumbleHead](http://bit.ly/bw242StrumbleHead)
- Tynningham Bay, East Lothian: [bit.ly/bw218TynninghamBay](http://bit.ly/bw218TynninghamBay)



# 1 SITE OF THE MONTH

## UNST

This most northerly of British isles usually makes birders think of spring or autumn migration but, says **Brydon Thomason**, with its seabird colonies and the chance of an early rarity, it can be excellent in late summer.

Its striking black-and-white plumage and bright red feet make Black Guillemot easy to identify.



BRYDON THOMASON (WWW.SHETLANDNATURE.NET)

**M**ention Shetland to most birders and thoughts of May and June or September and October are sure to spring to mind, as a slide show of megas flashes through their mind's eye. The months between these periods, however, are largely understated, but still offer some superb opportunities. August is such a month – with a fabulous fusion of iconic breeding seabirds, breathtaking scenery and early autumn migrants, it is a time that any birder with a penchant for outer island birding should certainly add to their wish list.

The most northerly island in Britain, Unst offers a truly unique range of

birding possibilities during the month. For starters, the island is home to internationally important breeding colonies of **Northern Gannet** and **Great Skua**, while at the beginning of the month **Puffins** still perform. Many other northern breeding specialities such as **Red-throated Diver**, **Arctic Skua** and **Black Guillemot** also feature.

### Getting to the 'top of Britain'

From Aberdeen, take the Northlink ferry to Lerwick on Mainland. Anyone familiar with Shetland will know that there are not many main roads, and so travelling from Mainland via Yell to Unst, ➤

### USEFUL CONTACTS

#### Travel information and timetables

- **Traveline:** 0871 200 2233 or [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info).
- **Traveline Scotland:** 0871 200 2233 or [www.travelinescotland.com](http://www.travelinescotland.com).
- **Traveline Cymru:** 0871 200 2233 or [www.traveline-cymru.info](http://www.traveline-cymru.info)

- **Stagecoach Bus:** [www.stagecoachbus.com](http://www.stagecoachbus.com).
- **Arriva Bus:** 0844 800 4411 or [www.arrivabus.co.uk](http://www.arrivabus.co.uk).
- **National Rail:** 0845 748 4950 or [www.nationalrail.com](http://www.nationalrail.com).
- **Sustrans:** 0117 926 8893 or [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk).

#### National bird news

**BirdGuides.com:** for all bird news and to report your own sightings, call 0333 577 2473, email [sightings@birdguides.com](mailto:sightings@birdguides.com) or visit [www.birdguides.com](http://www.birdguides.com).

#### Mapping

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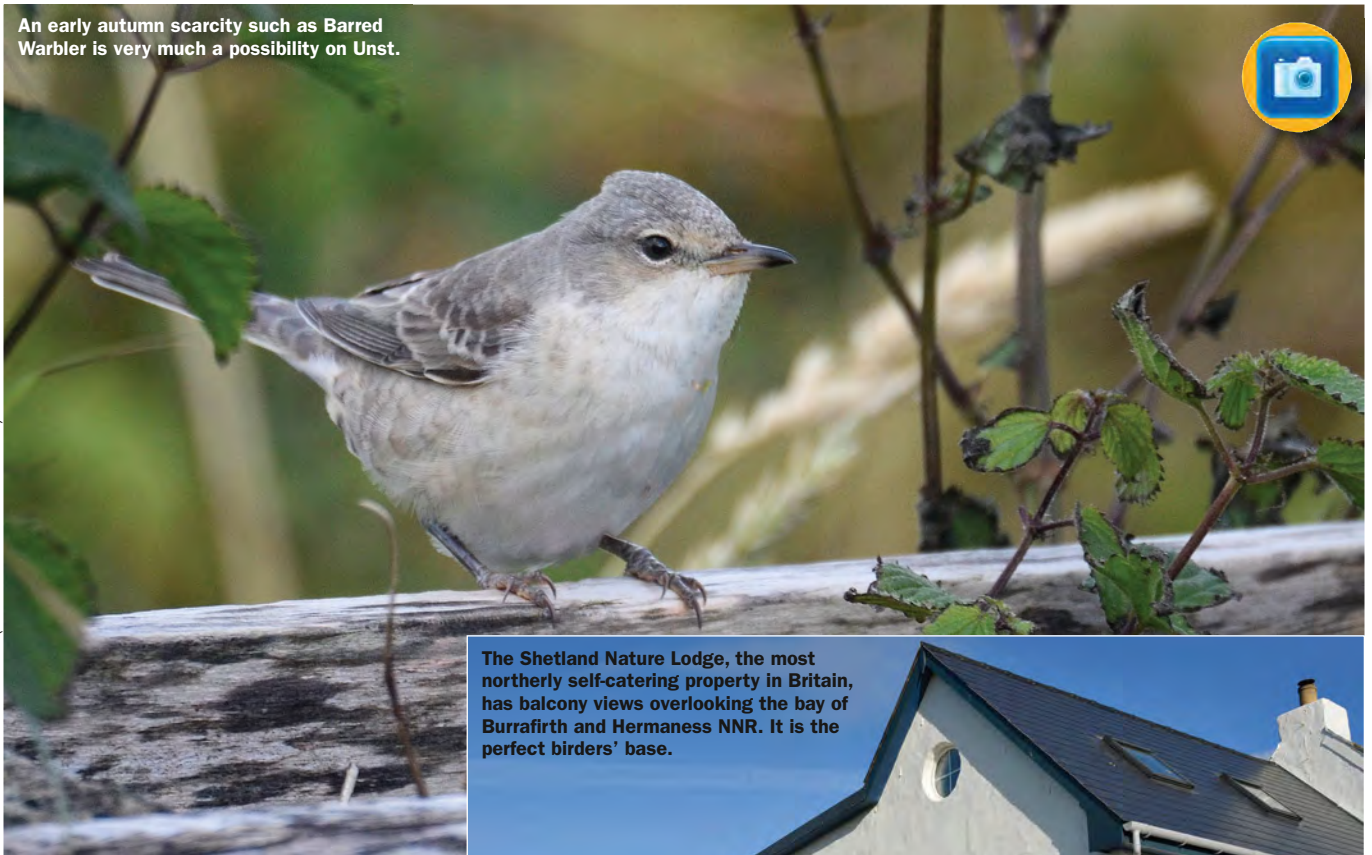
itineraries at [bit.ly/BWMaps](http://bit.ly/BWMaps).

#### Further information

- **County bird recorders:** [www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/birdtrack/bird-recording/county-bird-recorders](http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/birdtrack/bird-recording/county-bird-recorders).
- **Birdwatch Bookshop:** for discounted birding books see [www.birdwatch.co.uk/store](http://www.birdwatch.co.uk/store).



An early autumn scarcity such as Barred Warbler is very much a possibility on Unst.



PHOTOS: BRYDON THOMASON (WWW.SHETLANDNATURE.NET)

The Shetland Nature Lodge, the most northerly self-catering property in Britain, has balcony views overlooking the bay of Burrafirth and Hermaness NNR. It is the perfect birders' base.



although it involves two ferry crossings, is quite straightforward. Visitors should check the ferry time table; booking, although not essential, is advised.

Take the A970 to Toft ferry terminal. Follow signs for the North Isles from Lerwick. From Sumburgh Airport, the journey takes about 60-90 minutes. From Toft, the ferry departs to Yell. Once disembarked, stay on the main road north to Gutcher ferry terminal. Here, you will board a second ferry, crossing to Belmont, Unst.

## Britain's most northerly seabird city

Once on Unst, a visit to Hermaness NNR **1** is simply a must. The vistas overlooking the dramatic cliffs and sea stacks that form the northernmost point of the British Isles are widely regarded as some of the most awe-inspiring seabird spectacles in Europe. There is excellent access via a gravel footpath and boardwalk which leads from the car park at Burrafirth right out across the moorland interior.

The reserve is home to more than 900 breeding pairs of Great Skuas, the third-largest colony in the world, while the cliffs and sea stacks host over 25,000 breeding pairs of Northern Gannets. Both species are present through the month as numbers only really start to

decrease as birds begin to depart during autumn, with both species remaining even as late as October.

Puffin, known locally as 'tammie nories', should still be present in decent numbers as many of the later breeders may still be feeding chicks; evenings can see gatherings of non-breeding birds returning to land to practise their social skills. The two must-see vantage points along cliffs are Toolie and the Neap.

## Autumn birding begins

There is something immensely special about the first signs of autumn migration. This is true for any patch-worker, but on Unst it's the combination of prosperous birding potential and the signs of summer still holding on through the weather as well as the wildlife. Not yet battered by the autumnal gales, the habitats still retain vibrancy, too, and with many breeding birds still in residence, even on a day without

migrants the wider picture offers top-quality birding through an avenue often long forgotten later in the autumn.

August is generally regarded as an off-peak month for visiting birders and so you are unlikely to bump into anyone else, aside from stalwarts working their local patches. Autumn migration is heralded by the first waders passing through, and by August the first **Knot** and **Sanderling** will have been logged, and with luck there may be a chance of **Little Stint** or even **Curlew Sandpiper**, although both are surprisingly scarce.

Although estuarine habitats are lacking on the isle, the Houb in Baltasound **2** is the best bet for waders. You can always aim higher and hope for a yank wader: Baird's Sandpiper has been found here in August. Haroldswick Pools **3** is the next best wader site, with **Green** and **Wood Sandpipers** recorded annually, as





well as **Greenshank**, while **Pectoral Sandpiper** has been reported here during the month; **Citrine Wagtail** can provide passerine excitement.

The first kiss of south-easterly winds will usually produce the first common migrants. Traditionally the second and third weeks offer the best potential, but if conditions are right it's game on from the first. The premier passerine sites are Halligarth **4**, Baltasound, Valyie **5**, Norwick **6**, and Skaw **7** up at the top end. An intuitive approach is recommended: bird to the elements and explore sites fully – anything can and has turned up anywhere.

In the right winds, a seawatch is worth a punt off the head of Lambaness **8**. Take the last right-hand turn en route to Skaw; caution is advised as there are a few rough parts on the road surface. There is a possibility of **Manx** and **Sooty Shearwaters**, while **Great Shearwater** has also been recorded off here. There is a good chance of a cetacean: Minke Whale and Harbour Porpoise are regular in early autumn, while Risso's, Atlantic White-sided and White-beaked Dolphins can be seen and there is always a chance of Orca. While on the subject of beasts not birds, keep an eye on the tide for Otter too, with the most reliable and accessible site being the inner shores of Baltasound, particularly the shore-side road along Buness **9**, where you can scan the shores along both sides of the Voe.

Common migrants such as **Willow** and **Garden Warblers**, **Whinchat**, **Pied Flycatcher** and **Common Redstart** are to be expected. If conditions are really good, an **Icterine**, **Marsh** or **Barred Warbler**, or perhaps a cheeky **Common**



The island's internationally important breeding colony of Northern Gannet should provide excellent photographic opportunities.

BRYDON THOMASON (WWW.SHETLANDNATURE.NET)

**Rosefinch**, **Wryneck** or **Red-backed Shrike**, would certainly all whet the whistle. Setting your sights higher for an early autumn rarity would not be over optimistic, either, as tasty August fare such as Greenish, Arctic, Paddyfield, Aquatic, Sykes's and Booted Warblers

have all been recorded on the island in recent Augusts, as have Two-barred Crossbill, Pallid Harrier and even an extremely unseasonal Rustic Bunting.

Migrants, breeding birds, mammals and great scenery – for an early autumn outer-island birding location, Unst has it all. ■

## **i** VISITOR INFORMATION

### READS



• **Where to Watch Birds in Britain** by Simon Harrap and Nigel Redman (second edition, Christopher Helm, £19.99) – order from £18.99 on page 77.

• **The Birds of Shetland** by Mike Pennington, Kevin Osborn, Paul Harvey, Roger Riddington, Dave Okill, Pete Ellis and Martin Heubeck (Christopher Helm, £40) – order from £38 on page 77

### › Sites and access

There is free public access to all sites, though car parking charges may apply. A bus service runs from Lerwick, Mainland, to Baltasound, Unst; call 01595 744868 or visit [www.zettrans.org.uk/bus/BusTimetables.asp](http://www.zettrans.org.uk/bus/BusTimetables.asp) for details. For ferry information, call Northlink Ferries on 0845 600 0449 or visit [www.northlinkferries.co.uk](http://www.northlinkferries.co.uk). For inter-island ferries call 01595 745804 or visit [www.shetland.gov.uk/ferries/](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/ferries/). Disabled access can be difficult; call the ferry operators prior to your trip.

### › Maps

Ordnance Survey Explorer 470 and Landranger 1.

### › Web resources

- [www.unst.org](http://www.unst.org) and [www.visit.shetland.org](http://www.visit.shetland.org) for general information about the island.
- [www.nature-shetland.co.uk](http://www.nature-shetland.co.uk) for the latest sightings.
- [www.shetlandnature.net](http://www.shetlandnature.net) for birding and wildlife holidays, visit *Birdwatch's* reader holiday partner Shetland Nature.
- Follow on Twitter: @shetlandnature and @NatureInShet.



See [bit.ly/BWMaps](http://bit.ly/BWMaps) for links to the fully annotated Google maps.

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# 2

## BOWLING GREEN MARSH

By Matt Knott

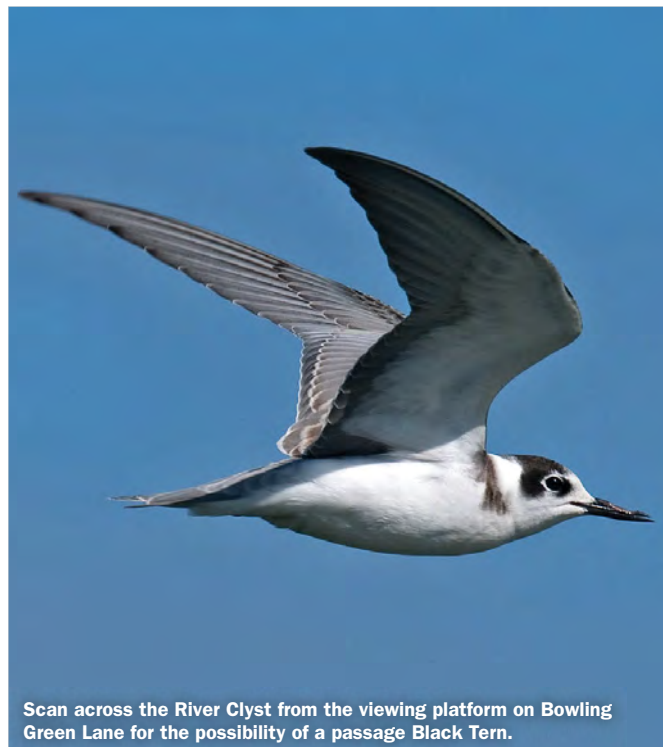
### Where and why

Bowling Green Marsh RSPB (SX 972876) lies at the north end of the Exe Estuary on the confluence of the Rivers Exe and Clyst, within easy reach of Topsham High Street. A hide provides good views of the whole marsh which, at high tide, may be packed with large numbers of roosting waders and wildfowl pushed off the estuary mud. It is arguably Devon's premier site for waders and, considering its small size, must attract more rarities per square metre than anywhere else in the county. Late summer is the most exciting time to visit in terms of numbers and variety of species. Try to coincide your visit with high tide.

### Route planner

The reserve is easily accessible from the M5. To reach the marsh, park in Holman Way car park, which is near Topsham train station. From the car park turn left and walk via Monmouth Avenue and Monmouth Street to Bowling Green Road. Follow the road down the hill and you will soon see the marsh. Gaps in the hedge along the lane provide tantalising glimpses, but the best views are afforded from the hide ①.

A visit during late summer will always provide plenty of interest, as even during the quietest periods a good number of Icelandic **Black-tailed Godwits** will be present and the array of wildfowl on show is likely to include species such as **Eurasian Wigeon**, **Eurasian Teal**, **Northern Shoveler** and perhaps **Gadwall**, Tufted Duck and Common



Scan across the River Clyst from the viewing platform on Bowling Green Lane for the possibility of a passage Black Tern.

Pochard. In August it is well worth scrutinising the often large number of brown, eclipse-plumaged wildfowl as there is a good chance of picking out a stripy-faced **Garganey**.

As summer progresses the marsh gets busier. Wader and wildfowl numbers build en route south from their northerly breeding grounds or arriving to winter, and the variety of species increases. Numbers of more regular species such as **Common Redshank**, **Northern Lapwing**, **Dunlin**, **Common Snipe** and **Eurasian Curlew** increase as autumn approaches, and they are joined by

burgeoning flocks of **Greenshank** and **Eurasian Whimbrel**.

Regular scarcities include **Wood** and **Green Sandpipers**, **Spotted Redshank** and **Ruff**, but many more species are possible, with past records of **Temminck's Stint**, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Pacific Golden Plover and Marsh and Baird's Sandpipers. The later in the summer you visit, the higher your chances of scoring **Little Stint** and **Curlew Sandpiper**, but September is usually the best time to catch up with both these scarcer species.

If you are visiting early in the

morning or late in the evening, it is worth scanning the reed edges for **Water Rail**, and in August and September **Spotted Crake** is also a possibility.

Numbers of **Grey Heron** and **Little Egret** vary depending on feeding conditions, but both are likely to be present, with numbers of the latter frequently into double figures. In the past, **Cattle Egrets** have been picked out among them.

From the hide, continue along Bowling Green Lane. After about 300 m, a clearly marked path to your left leads to a viewing platform ② which affords panoramic views across the estuary. For good views of waders this spot is best a couple hours either side of high tide. Scanning the river from here may also provide views of gulls and terns, with **Little Gull** and **Black Tern** both possible. In August there is the possibility of picking up an **Osprey** fishing on the river, with your chances of success increasing as summer merges into autumn.

From the viewing platform you can retrace your steps to Bowling Green Lane and continue a short distance to the Goatwalk ③, a narrow footpath along the seawall that takes you back to the car park via the picturesque and historic town of Topsham (about a 15-minute walk). From the Goatwalk you have superb views of the River Exe with the possibility of seeing more species, especially on a low tide. Black-tailed Godwits often feed close to the seawall. ■



## VISITOR INFORMATION

### READS



**Where to Watch Birds in Devon and Cornwall** by David Norman and Vic Tucker (fifth edition). Christopher Helm, £18.99 – order from £16.99 on page 77.

### Sites and access

The reserve is open at all times and entry is free, though donations are appreciated. The car park at Holman Way is pay and display. The nearest train station is about half a mile away at Topsham. The number 57 bus stops in Elm Grove Road, again about half a mile from the reserve. Local buses are run by Stagecoach Bus. The reserve is on Sustrans National Cycle Network 2, the Exe Trail cycle path. Bowling Green Hide has wheelchair access and limited disabled parking right outside, but during high tides, at peak times on a weekend, it gets busy.

### Maps

Ordnance Survey Explorer 114 and Landranger 192.

### Web resources

- [www.rspb.org.uk/bowlinggreenmarsh](http://www.rspb.org.uk/bowlinggreenmarsh) for more information on the reserve.
- [www.devonbirds.org](http://www.devonbirds.org), the county bird club, for site information and sightings.
- Follow on Twitter: @DevonBirds and @RSPBSouthWest.



See [bit.ly/BWMaps](http://bit.ly/BWMaps) for links to fully annotated Google maps



## RUTLAND WATER

By Tim Appleton

## Where and why

With autumn migration in full swing, August is a great month to enjoy a day's birding at Rutland Water. Up to 20 species of wader are possible, wildfowl numbers are building by the day and there's still time for a last look at the Rutland Ospreys before they set off on migration. At this time of year, the reservoir is full of visitors enjoying a range of recreational activities. As a result most birds are to be found at the shallow western end close to the town of Oakham.

## Route planner

Your first port of call should be the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre at Egleton ①. Open daily from 9 am, volunteers will be able to provide you with the latest sightings as you obtain a permit. Before you dash out the door, it's well worth scanning across Lagoon 1 from the viewing gallery. Wildfowl numbers are on the increase and you may well be rewarded with a **Garganey** among larger numbers of **Eurasian Teal**, **Northern Shoveler** and **Gadwall**. A flock of **Black-tailed Godwits** may drop in.

From the centre head north along the well-marked trails to Lagoon 4 ②. Three hides – Dunlin, Sandpiper and Plover – provide panoramic views across this large lagoon. Constructed in 2008, it is one of the best places for migrant waders. **Little Stint** and **Wood** and **Curlew Sandpipers** are all possible during August, along with commoner species such as **Ruff**, **Greenshank** and **Common Sandpiper**. It's worth checking

through any gulls. **Mediterranean Gull** is regular, along with **Yellow-legged** and occasionally a **Caspian**.

Next, head across to nearby Shoveler Hide, overlooking Lagoon 3 ③. This reed-fringed waterbody attracts hunting **Hobbies** and the reedbed often holds **Bitterns** from August onwards. There is every chance of a **Water Rail** feeding at the foot of the hide.

Up to 100 **Little Egrets** may be present around the reservoir by the latter part of the month, and Lagoon 3 is a good place to enjoy close views of birds hunting in the shallows. Listen out for **Cetti's Warbler** here, too. A careful search through the wildfowl may be rewarded with **Garganey** or **Red-crested Pochard**, while easterly winds could result in flocks of **Little Gulls** or **Black Terns** joining the **Common Terns** which breed on the lagoon.

Lapwing Hide is a two-minute walk from Shoveler and provides views across the South Arm of Rutland Water. As the water level drops, this is another good spot to check for passage waders and also **Black Tern** and **Little Gull**.

On your way back to the Birdwatching Centre it is worth calling in at Redshank Hide. This hide provides good views of one of the reserve's two **Sand Martin** banks ④. Last year more than 1,000 chicks were ringed in the bank and late broods of young will still be in the nests. Fledged youngsters need to have their wits about them to avoid the **Hobbies** which hunt over the lagoon.

After enjoying a morning on the Egleton reserve, head around to

the Lyndon Visitor Centre ⑤ on the reservoir's south shore, mid-way between Manton and Edith Weston. Lyndon is home to the Osprey Project and live images from a nest in nearby Manton Bay are shown in the centre. You should also check the feeders for **Tree Sparrow** and **Yellowhammer**, and you may be able to compare **Marsh** and **Willow Tits** which both regularly visit the feeders.



JOHN WRIGHT

From the centre head west along the reserve footpath. It's worth calling in at Tufted Duck Hide, where **Kingfishers** may be seen at this time of year. Further along the path, two hides

overlook the **Osprey** nest, the first of which is Waterscape Hide.

By August the youngsters are on the wing, and sometimes perch in a dead tree immediately in front of the hide. **Water Voles** are often seen from the hide, too. If you have time, continue to Shallow Water Hide which provides closer views of the Ospreys and also the muddy margins of Manton Bay. **Greenshank** and **Ruff** are common along the shoreline, and a **Wood** or **Curlew Sandpiper** may put in an appearance. **Garganey** is again possible among the moulting wildfowl. ■



## VISITOR INFORMATION

## READS



**Where to Watch Birds in the East Midlands** by Rob Fray (fifth edition, Christopher Helm, £18.99) – order from £16.99 on page 77

## ► Sites and access

The visitor centres are open daily, 9 am–5 pm. Permits cost £5.65 (adults) or £4.45 (concessions); Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust members are entitled to a 10 per cent discount. The nearest train station is at Oakham. Rutland Shorelink (bus service 44A) runs between Oakham and the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre; see [www.rutland.gov.uk](http://www.rutland.gov.uk) for details. All hides are wheelchair friendly.

## ► Birdfair

This annual event takes place at Rutland Water on 21–23 August. Visit for the best in optics and photographic equipment, wildlife tours, books, clothing and much more – see page 87 or visit [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk).

## ► Maps

Ordnance Survey Explorer 234 and Landranger 130.

## ► Web resources

- [www.rutlandwater.org.uk](http://www.rutlandwater.org.uk) and [www.ospreys.org.uk](http://www.ospreys.org.uk) for information about the reserve and the Osprey Project.



See [bit.ly/BWMaps](http://bit.ly/BWMaps) for links to fully annotated Google maps





# 4

## FAIRBURN INGS

By Emmie Wise

### Where and why

Fairburn Ings RSPB has a wide variety of habitats, including woodland and wetland, that owe their existence to the legacy of the coal-mining industry. This diversity means there's always something to see, no matter what the season. The reserve is set against a backdrop of its industrial heritage, with the lakes that are vital for wildfowl and waders formed by subsidence after mining came to an end. The old spoil heaps have been restored over the years, with meadow and woodland habitats providing a home to a range of birdlife, as well as insects, wildflowers and fungi.

### Route planner

The reserve is very accessible from the M62, M1 and A1(M). Follow the brown RSPB signs from Fairburn village or the A656 until you reach the big welcome signs that guide you into the car park.

From the car park, walk up to the visitor centre **1** and look and listen out for **Tree Sparrows** in the hedgerows; many took up residence in the nestboxes on the visitor centre in spring. Scour the skies over Newfield Plantation for **Red Kite**, **Common Buzzard** and maybe a late **Hobby**. Pop into the centre to find out about recent sightings. Turn right out of the visitor centre and make a first stop at the wildlife garden to check out the feeders – the declining **Willow Tit** is a daily sighting here.

Follow the Discovery Trail straight on and look out for woodland species such as **Treecreeper** and **Great Spotted**

**Willow Tit** is Red Listed as a Species of Conservation Concern due to its dramatic population decline. It is seen daily on the feeders in Fairburn Ings' wildlife garden.

REINT JAKOB SCHUT (WWW.AGAMI.NL)



**Woodpecker** on your way to Pickup Hide **2**. You could see **Green** and **Wood Sandpipers**, **Dunlin**, **Ruff** and **Spotted Redshank** in the shallows, or look to the skies for **Marsh Harrier** soaring overhead. Scarcities seen here in recent years include **Spoonbill**, **Glossy Ibis** and **Great Egret**.

From the hide turn right and continue on the Discovery Trail until you reach the Kingfisher Screen **3**. **Kingfisher** is Fairburn Ings' iconic species, and with a little patience you should see one here. Stride out up the hill after this, and take a look to your right down to Big Hole **4**. There are rising numbers of **Northern Lapwing** at this time of year and also species such **Little Ringed Plover**, **Oystercatcher** and

**Avocet** to look out for. This is a great spot for loafing gulls, with **Caspian** and **Yellow-legged Gulls** both regular late-summer visitors.

At the top of the hill, take the Lin Dike Link trail to the right, through the gate. Follow the track for almost 2 miles along the River Aire. In late summer, look out for passage migrants such as **Spotted Flycatcher** and **Common Redstart** in the riverside trees.

After you pass under the Iron Bridge and go through the kissing gate, take the bridge to the right and continue on the path around the corner to the right, until you reach the Lin Dike Hide **5**, where you will be treated to panoramic views across the flashes. If you're lucky, among other species maybe you'll spot an **Osprey** passing

through on return migration.

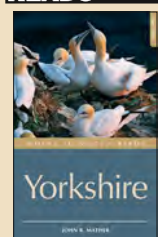
This is great habitat for waders, too. Look out for flocks of **Black-tailed Godwit**, as well as **Greenshank** and **Ringed Plover**. Wildfowl likely to be seen here should include **Northern Shoveler**, **Gadwall**, Common Pochard and possibly **Garganey**, while **Little Egrets** are usually in evidence. **Cattle Egret**, **Whiskered Tern** and **Red-necked Phalarope** have all been seen in recent years.

Next, either retrace your steps or carefully head back along the roadside to the visitor centre, stopping to look over the various pools and flashes, where sightings of **Bittern**, **Cetti's Warbler** and **Bearded Tit** are all possible. ■



## VISITOR INFORMATION

### READS



**Where to Watch Birds in Yorkshire** by John Mather (third edition, Christopher Helm, £18.99) – order from £16.99 on page 77

### Sites and access

The visitor centre is open every day, 9 am-5 pm; the car park shuts at 8 pm. Entry is free, though there is a £2.50 car parking charge for non-members. Parking is free for members and disabled badge holders. The nearest train station is three miles away at Castleford. A bus service runs between Castleford and Fairburn; local buses are run by Arriva Bus. The visitor centre, family trail and Lin Dike trail are accessible to wheelchair users.

### Maps

Ordnance Survey Explorer 289 and Landranger 105.

### Web resources

- [www.rspb.org.uk/fairburnings](http://www.rspb.org.uk/fairburnings) for further reserve information.
- [www.tka.co.uk/yoc](http://www.tka.co.uk/yoc), the York Ornithological Club, for sightings and site information.
- Follow on Twitter: @fairburnings.



See [bit.ly/BWMaps](http://bit.ly/BWMaps) for links to fully annotated Google maps





# AUGUST'S TARGET BIRD

## Greenish Warbler

BRYDON THOMASON (WWW.SHETLANDNATURE.NET)



If you want to find your own Greenish Warbler, the east coast of Britain – and especially north Norfolk – is a good bet, as can be seen from the BirdGuides.com map (right) which shows 26 reports from August last year. For more northerly based birders, Shetland can also be productive: this individual (above) was on Unst in August 2013.



**T**his bright little warbler is a scarce visitor to Britain, mostly in autumn. Like other leaf warblers it is an active feeder, rarely staying still for long. Care must be taken to distinguish it from some related species.

Greenish Warbler is often regarded as a classic example of a 'ring' species, with five subspecies

spread from Europe (*Phylloscopus trochiloides viridanus*) across Asia to far-eastern Russia (*P t plumbeitarsus*). This last is known as Two-barred Greenish Warbler and is split by some authorities, including *Birdwatch*. Each subspecies interbreeds with its neighbour, with the exception of the westernmost and easternmost

subspecies which just overlap. In Britain, almost all records are of *viridanus*, but there have been four occurrences of *plumbeitarsus*. Green Warbler *P nitidus* was once regarded as part of the Greenish Warbler complex, but is now widely regarded as a separate species.

Greenish Warblers are thought to have originated in southern Asia. From there they spread around the Tibetan Plateau, colonising to the east and west, with the eastern and western populations eventually meeting. The expansion may be continuing, with birds now breeding in Germany and southern Finland, and the number of spring singing individuals in Britain increasing. Western breeding birds migrate south-eastwards to winter in the Indian Subcontinent.

In Britain, the species occurs as a migrant mostly on the east coast from Shetland southwards to Kent, with the majority of records in England. Spring reports have been increasing, and are usually in late May and early June, often involving singing

males. Most sightings, however, are in autumn. Arrivals start in August and usually peak in the final week, ending by the end of September.

There are about 20 records in Britain annually, but in 2005 there was a record 47, followed by 42 (mostly in Norfolk) in 2007. As a result, the species is now classified as a scarcity rather than an official rarity. It is rare in Scotland, with just a few records in most years, sometimes a dozen or more, while in Wales it is still a real rarity.

### How to see

Late August is the best time to find Greenish Warblers, with early September a close second. Sites with bushes and trees on the east coast are worth checking. As with all *Phylloscopus* warblers, the species likes leafy trees and shrubs, and is always active. Familiarise yourself with its call, as many birds are initially picked out by vocalisations. Birds will often stay for a few days, so check BirdGuides.com for the latest sightings. ■

## **i** FIND YOUR OWN

The east coast of England during easterly winds is the best place to be looking, especially in Norfolk, with a walk out to Blakeney Point in mid-August potentially worth the effort. In Scotland it is regular in the Northern Isles and otherwise mainly seen at sites on the Aberdeenshire coast. Most migrant hot-spots on the east coast have had records, and the ones listed below seem to attract birds regularly.

### England

- **Co Durham:** Whitburn CP (NZ 411634)
- **East Yorkshire:** Flamborough Head (TA 254706) and Spurn Point (TA 419148)
- **Norfolk:** Blakeney Point (TG 006461) and Holkham Pines (TF 880452)

### Scotland

- **Shetland:** Sumburgh Head (HU 407079) and Fair Isle (HZ 221723)
- **Orkney:** North Ronaldsay (HY 785560)



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# John Philip Busby: artist, teacher, writer and lifelong naturalist.

2 February 1928-3 June 2015

While at school in the mid 1980s, I purchased a book that was to change my life. It was *Drawing Birds: an RSPB Guide* by John Busby, and it led me into a whole new way of seeing and expression as a visual artist. John was a pioneer of working direct from life and he had that exceptionally rare talent of making the most difficult seem easy. His drawings flowed with life and character, his birds and animals deftly flew and skipped across the page with a movement seldom achieved before. His landscapes and rock pools invited you in to explore and discover, with beautiful balances and harmonies of colour.

John was born in Bradford, West Yorkshire, in 1928, before the family moved to Menston, a village in the heart of Wharfedale, North Yorkshire, where his passion for the outdoors blossomed. He attended Ilkley Grammar School and followed his love and talent for drawing and painting, leading him to study at both Leeds and Edinburgh Colleges of Art, after completing two years of National Service in the RAF.

At the end of his studies and a postgraduate travelling scholarship, John was offered a teaching post at Edinburgh College of Art, which he enjoyed from 1956 to 1988. He was a natural teacher, with a never-ending patience and generosity.

John also chaired the committee that ran the 57 Gallery in George Street, Edinburgh, was President of the Society of Scottish Artists 1973-75, a member of the Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Watercolour, and of the Royal Scottish Academy. He was also a founder member of the Society of Wildlife Artists. In 2009 he was declared Master Wildlife Artist by the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wisconsin, USA. He exhibited widely in both his adopted Scotland and his native England, with solo exhibitions in Edinburgh, Lavenham and Dumfries, as well as a major retrospective at Bradford City Art Gallery in 1999.

How poignant it is that as I write this, we have just learned of the passing one of John's great friends, the naturalist Bryan Nelson. It was this friendship that extended John's career into illustrating books. Of his own books the first, published in 1982, was *The Living Birds of Eric Ennion*, John's tribute to an artist he much admired. More books followed: *Nature Drawings* (1983), the influential *Drawing Birds* (1986, 2004), *Birds in Mallorca* (1988), *Land Marks and Sea Wings* (2005) and *Looking at Birds: an Antidote to Field Guides* (2013). His final book, *Lines in Nature*, will be published by Langford Press later this year.

In 1988 he started an annual, week-long Seabird Drawing Course, based on the East Lothian coast, which still continues to this day. The course has seen hundreds of participants from many parts of the world, all encouraged and shown ways of depicting that most challenging of subjects: whirling seabirds against spectacular towering cliffs.

John was a committed Christian, and classical music was another love. It was while singing in the Edinburgh University Singers that he met a young mezzo-soprano called Joan. They married in 1959, had three children, Philip, Rachel and Sarah, and nine grandchildren.

Humour and his gentle way are my abiding memories of John. I recall the times we sat beside each other on Bass Rock, with John, having seen immature Northern Gannets pulling at each others' tails while hanging in the wind like puppets on strings, rapidly and magically drawing the action with ease.

John was an artist who taught many to see, and with a wit and humour as gentle as his palette of rock pool greys. He was the mentor that would waddle around the room trying to live as the character of a penguin; he was a genius, a presence, an inspiration and a vision with a rare ability to connect. He will be hugely missed.

In 1981, John wrote: "I must say it is enjoyable to have commissions, though important to work on paintings for their own sake in order to make discoveries beyond oneself. Trying to externalise experiences by painting, writing and so on helps to understand them and to be more receptive. Being receptive and willing to change and grow makes one most alive I think – more vulnerable to pain and joy."

A very special retrospective exhibition will be held at Nature in Art, Wallsworth Hall, Twigworth, Gloucester, from 2 August to 6 September this year.

**Darren Woodhead**

**John Busby was also a much-valued contributor to *Birdwatch*, designing a special Red-necked Phalarope logo when the magazine was launched in 1992 and supplying illustrations for a number of articles.**



**Top: John Busby sketching Northern Gannets at Bass Rock, East Lothian, in 2005. Below: John's oil painting of Northern Gannets.**







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# A fight we can win



The way to best protect the persecuted Hen Harrier is to draw more public attention to it, says **Mark Avery**, as he introduces this year's Hen Harrier Day and his own take on the conflict between birds of prey and the shooting industry.

**H**en Harrier Day 2015 events will be held across the country on 9 August this year. It's a sad fact that since last year the need to protest the plight of the species has grown, but birders and conservationists have risen to the challenge, and you can be a part of it.

The second year of Hen Harrier Day will be bigger and better. A rally involving TV presenter Chris Packham will be held in the Peak District on the morning of 9 August. Events will also take place at Radipole, Dorset, the Forest of Bowland, Lancashire (the heartland of the small English Hen Harrier population for many years), and in Scotland.

Also this year, there will be a special evening event in Buxton on 8 August with Chris Packham, Mark Cocker, the RSPB *Skydancer* film and a six-foot Hen Harrier called Henry – details of tickets are available at [www.henharrierday.org](http://www.henharrierday.org).

The purpose of Hen Harrier Day is to draw attention to the plight of the most persecuted bird in the country a few days ahead of the opening of the grouse shooting season on the 'Inglorious' Twelfth of August. The science says there should be around 2,600 pairs of Hen Harriers in Britain (with some 330 pairs in England), but there are only 600-800 pairs (and just four pairs in England last year). Instead of there being a number of celebratory pieces in the *Daily Telegraph* and the shooting press about the traditional start of the grouse shooting season, we need the media to tell the general public that there are considerable downsides to this industry, including the almost complete absence of Hen Harriers from driven grouse moors across Britain.

## Raising awareness

At the Birders Against Wildlife Crime conference in Buxton in March, I made the point that there are a few of us, let's say about 5 per cent of the British population, and including many of the readers of *Birdwatch* for sure, who are on the side of the Hen Harrier. These people know that it is persecuted by some in the grouse industry and want that persecution to end. On the other hand, there is another group of people, let's say another 5 per cent of the population, who are on the side of the grouse-moor managers.

That leaves 90 per cent of the population who don't know, and at the moment don't care, about grouse shooting, Hen Harriers, intensive burning of heather moorland or the wider ecosystem impacts of this form of upland management. Hen Harrier Day is one way of spreading the word to that 90 per cent, and we can be absolutely sure that as the word spreads, and more ordinary people understand that Hen Harriers are illegally killed because they eat Red Grouse, then our 5 per cent will grow and the pressure on the grouse industry to change its ways will become unstoppable.

This year, five male Hen Harriers have disappeared from active nests in the north of England – nests that were being watched and guarded around the clock. The males

provision the female and chicks at the nest and travel long distances to forage, becoming vulnerable once they leave the areas where volunteers and RSPB staff are keeping a close eye on them. Grouse shooting interests seem to think that monitoring of these nests has disturbed them – though the nests remained active and the females in attendance until they deserted after the males failed to return.

Hen Harrier Day looks set to become an annual event in the birders' calendar, until this fabulous raptor gets the government action and support it deserves and needs. We must send out a message to the 90 per cent of people who don't know about this issue, so that the pressure on wildlife criminals to change their ways, and on politicians to act, becomes irresistible.

Part of my own contribution to the debate over the combined fates of Hen Harrier and the driven grouse shooting industry is my new book *Inglorious – Conflict in the Uplands*, from which an extract appears in the following pages. I believe that we should ban driven grouse shooting because of its impacts on the ecology of the uplands, of which a lack of Hen Harriers is just part of the picture.

You don't have to agree with that view to be part of Hen Harrier Day – you just have to care about the bird. But *Inglorious* will be out in time for Hen Harrier Day and, even more importantly, for the 'Inglorious Twelfth'. I think you'll find it a useful summary of where the debate is right now, and you'll find some suggestions for how you can help make things better. As Chris Packham said, quoting Gandhi's words on campaigning, at last year's Peak District Hen Harrier Day event: "We will win!"

And finally, I don't want to be too much of a creep, but I'd like to thank Dominic Mitchell and all at *Birdwatch* for their support for Hen Harriers and Hen Harrier Day, both last year and this year – it's great to have Britain's finest magazine for birders right behind this cause. Thank you! ■





# HEN HARRIER DAY EVENTS



Henry the Hen Harrier poses outside the Palace Hotel, Buxton, which will host this year's Hen Harrier Eve event.

MARK AVERY

## HEN HARRIER EVE

**Saturday 8 August 2015**

**Time:** 7.30-10 pm.

**Location:** The High Peak Room, the Palace Hotel, Buxton SK17 6AG.

*A celebration of the Hen Harrier in music, spoken word and film.*

**Confirmed so far:** Chris Packham, Mark Avery, Jeremy Deller, Mark Cocker and Henry the Hen Harrier.

## HEN HARRIER DAY

**Sunday 9 August 2015**

### Peak District

#### ■ HEN HARRIER DAY GATHERING

**Time:** 11 am-1 pm.

**Location:** Goytsclough Quarry, the Goyt Valley, near Buxton, Derbyshire (venue subject to confirmation).

*Organised by Birders Against Wildlife Crime, in association with the RSPB and the*

*Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.*

**Speakers:** Chris Packham, Jeff Knott, Mark Avery and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.

#### ■ HEN HARRIER DAY FAIR

**Time:** 2-4 pm.

**Location:** The Promenade, Pavilion Gardens, St John's Road, Buxton SK17 6BE.

*Organised by Birders Against Wildlife Crime, with stalls from BAWC, the RSPB, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, League Against Cruel Sports and eight other organisations. An appearance by Henry the Hen Harrier and many other events.*

### Forest of Bowland

#### ■ HEN HARRIER DAY GATHERING

**Time:** 10.30 am- 1.30 pm

**Location:** Village Green, Dunsop Bridge, Clitheroe BB7 3BB.



*Organised by the North West Raptor Protection Group.*

#### ■ HEN HARRIER DAY FAIR

**Time:** noon-4 pm

**Location:** Abbeystead Village Hall, Over Wyresdale, Lancaster LA2 9BQ

*Organised by Rewilding Bowland.*

### Dorset

#### ■ HEN HARRIER DAY GATHERING

*Times to be confirmed.*

**Location:** Arne RSPB, Wareham BH20 5BJ

*Organised by Ashley Watts.*

### Isle of Mull

#### ■ HEN HARRIER DAY FAIR

**Time:** 10 am-3 pm.

**Location:** Craignure Bunkhouse, Isle of Mull PA65 6AY.

*Organised by Rachel French and Ewan Miles, in association with Birders Against Wildlife Crime.*

All information was correct at the time of going to press but could change, so please check. Up-to-date information and further details can be found at:

**[www.henharrierday.org](http://www.henharrierday.org)**

Or follow on Twitter: @birdersagainst, @HHDaysouth and @RSPB\_Skydancer



# Inglorious

In this exclusive extract from his new book, **Mark Avery** examines the conflict between shooting interests and conservationists in an era when populations of raptors – notably Hen Harrier – have shrunk and those of Red Grouse exploded to unnaturally high levels, all in the name of a ‘sport’ which has little to do with tradition and competition, and everything to do with money and private upland estates.

JARI PELTONÄKI (WWW.AGAMI.NL)



It is easy to not notice Hen Harriers as one goes about one's daily life. They live in remote places and are fairly rare. You just don't bump into Hen Harriers that often. As a result the vast majority of the British public do not know or care much about this bird, so they are unaware of the conflict that it provokes among grouse shooters and nature conservationists, and of how high the feelings run on both sides of the argument.

Hen (and Northern) Harriers have been eating Red (and Willow) Grouse – among many other prey items – for tens of thousands of years. By contrast, men have been going into the hills of Britain to shoot Red Grouse for a mere 200-300 years, and driven grouse shooting has only been a major activity for about 150 years. For the first century of driven grouse shooting, Hen Harrier was not an issue – there were hardly any nesting on the British mainland, and in any case it was still legal, or largely legal, to kill them.

After 1939 things began to change. The economics of the uplands shifted towards sheep and forestry; grouse shooting declined in extent, and with it the number of gamekeepers employed in the hills. Hen Harriers made a comeback, facilitated by the fact that after 1954 it was illegal to kill them. Grouse shooting appeared to be on the way out, through no fault of the Hen Harrier, up until the mid-1980s.

Over the past 30 years, however, the industry has experienced a resurgence. This was aided by research carried out by the Game Conservancy Trust and others, but in particular by Peter Hudson figuring out how to reduce the impact of strongylosis (a debilitating worm infestation) on Red Grouse. Grouse shooting became an increasingly feasible way to make a living from an upland estate, and it was marketed as a fine field sport, attracting rich clients not just from Britain

**Hen Harrier could be lost in England, mostly due to illegal killing, if steps aren't taken to protect this magnificent raptor from persecution. Hen Harrier Day is one way birders are bringing the species' plight to the notice of the general public (see opposite).**

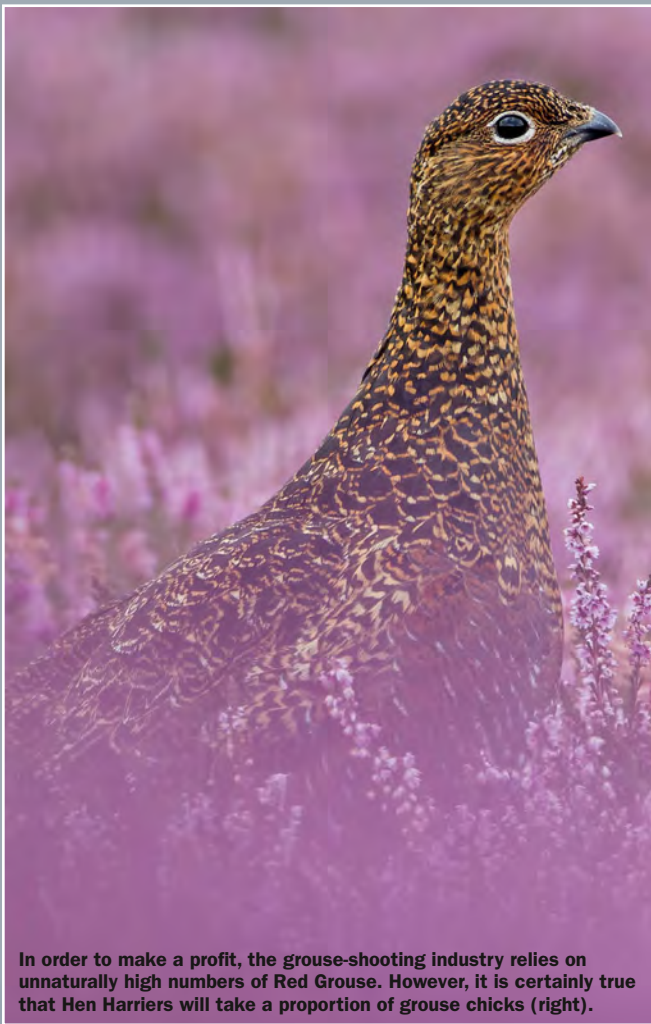
but from overseas as well.

Under these circumstances, the appearance of a hunting Hen Harrier on a grouse moor became less and less welcome. Now there was more money to be made from grouse shooting, but legal protection meant that it was harder to get rid of the predator. Nature conservationists were, at this time, not too bothered about grouse shooting. Indeed, they saw it as an ally in preventing the worst excesses of blanket conifer afforestation of attractive, wildlife-rich and largely unprotected upland areas. Conifer plantations were seen as enemy number one, sheep as enemy number two and the grouse-moor manager often as 'my enemies' enemy' and therefore my friend.

However, this happy state of affairs was not to last, as the calls for something to be done about Hen Harriers became more and more strident. Grouse-moor managers claimed that the raptors ate large numbers of Red Grouse and also disrupted shoots by their very presence, and that this was imposing a serious economic cost on their environmentally beneficial businesses. Most conservation organisations were fairly sympathetic to the view that grouse-moor management did quite a lot of good, and left the arguments about birds of prey to the RSPB.

Not surprisingly, the RSPB took a dim view of the level of illegal killing of raptors that was rumoured to be carried out on grouse moors, and also saw the anti-Hen Harrier rhetoric as worrying, particularly as it might be the beginning of a wider campaign against birds of prey in general. The grouse-moor managers spoke from their experience on the ground,





In order to make a profit, the grouse-shooting industry relies on unnaturally high numbers of Red Grouse. However, it is certainly true that Hen Harriers will take a proportion of grouse chicks (right).

BRIAN W MATTHEWS



PAUL MIGUEL

“The Hen Harrier is unique among British birds in the scale of impact which wildlife crime continues to have on its range, distribution and breeding numbers”



but they were thought to be exaggerating greatly by many as they had never seemed the most raptor-friendly of groups.

#### Scientific approach

Everybody says that they approve of good science and want to base their views on it, but most people use science the way a drunk uses a lamppost – more for support than for illumination. I would say this applies to many environmental NGOs, all shooting-centred NGOs, and very largely to governments, too. The Langholm Study, as it was usually called, was a big piece of science that illuminated the facts around the conflict between grouse shooting and the Hen Harrier, but did not lead to any sort of resolution of that conflict. In fact, things got worse rather than better.



Heather moors are not a natural habitat and left to their own devices would soon become overgrown. To preserve the moor it is deliberately burned. Research has shown that such burning has a considerable detrimental effect on the wider environment.

REBECCA COLE



The origins of the study lay in the debate that used to occur between conservationists and grouse shooters concerning the impacts of birds of prey, including Hen Harriers, on driven grouse shooting. Conservationists like me were always sceptical about claims made by grouse-moor managers that Hen Harriers and other raptors had a seriously detrimental effect on grouse bags. Leslie Brown discussed the issue in his *New Naturalist* book on birds of prey and was clearly unconvinced that raptors did, or could, take enough Red Grouse to deplete stocks to a great extent, although he thought more evidence was needed. But grouse-moor managers were adamant that Hen Harriers could be a serious pest of grouse moors. In the absence of hard evidence, the debate could have gone on for ever.

Driven grouse shooting depends, for its profitability, on massively unnatural populations of Red Grouse, and the management regime that delivers those populations depends on illegal control of protected wildlife by some in the industry and unsustainable land-use practices. Because you can't square that circle, and the grouse shooters are simply fighting to maintain a discredited status quo, there is no happy ending as long as driven grouse shooting persists. We could be in for a pleasant surprise – it could all happen very quickly – but it is more likely it will take some time, because the grouse shooters own much of the land, are politically well-connected, rich and quite clever at getting their own way.

But it's unusual for the few to get their way over the many, and the more publicity that is given to driven grouse shooting the more the ranks of protesters will swell, and the louder their voices will become in politicians' ears. The message of this book is that driven grouse shooting is an unsporting 'sport' carried out for



MARKUS VARESVUO (WWW.BIROPHOTO.FI)

**Five Hen Harrier nests have failed this year after the males disappeared. The RSPB mounts 24-hour protection of breeding sites, but the male birds travel long distances to get food, making them vulnerable to persecution.**

the pleasure and the profit of the few, at the expense – socially, financially and environmentally – of the many. If it hadn't been invented in Victorian times we would never invent it now. All we have to do is to imagine the range of better futures that await our economy, our people and our wildlife if we cease driven grouse shooting, and then act to bring them about. Then we will get a happy ending. ■

This article is adapted from *Inglorious* by Mark Avery, published by Bloomsbury on 30 July.

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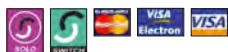
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wrecks the ecology of the hills.

Presenting both sides of this polemic issue, Mark Avery also explains why, after many years of soul searching, he has come down in favour of an outright ban. Ever-controversial, Mark is guaranteed to stir up a debate about field 'sports', the countryside and big business in a book that all British conservationists will want to read. ■





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# Wild London



A huge project to create one of Europe's biggest urban wetlands is under way in north-east London. **Ian Tokelove** of the London Wildlife Trust explains what is being done to create a haven for both wildlife and people.

PENNY DIXIE (WWW.PENNYDIXIE.CO.UK)



**Above:** Walthamstow Reservoirs in north-east London remains an integral part of the capital's water supply. The site is also important for a wide range of waterbirds.

**Below:** Bittern, which is rare in London, has been recorded at the reserve. Improvements could mean the new Walthamstow Wetlands might become a breeding site for the species.



STEVE YOUNG (WWW.BIRDSONFILM.COM)

A massive new nature reserve, Walthamstow Wetlands, is coming to north-east London, part of a 15-year vision to create what may become one of the largest urban wetlands in Europe.

The site has previously gone unnoticed by many, being known mainly to local anglers and birders. The new reserve is based around Walthamstow Reservoirs, a complex of nine large water bodies constructed between 1853 and 1904. They remain an integral part of the capital's water supply and their position in the heart of the Lower Lea Valley means the site is highly important for biodiversity, and in particular a wide range of birdlife.

The new Walthamstow Wetlands reserve will be the result of habitat enhancements to some of the reservoirs and their surrounds, as well as creating improved opportunities for people to access the site. The reservoirs have had a long-standing birding interest, and the aim of the wetlands is to ensure that a broader audience can enjoy the reserve without compromising its importance for birds.

## Joint initiative

The wetlands are currently under construction, as part of a joint project between the London Borough of Waltham Forest, London Wildlife Trust and Thames Water.

The Lea Valley is one of the few byways for migrating, wintering and breeding birds in the Greater London area, and as such acts as a 'funnel', refuelling site and safe haven for hundreds of thousands of

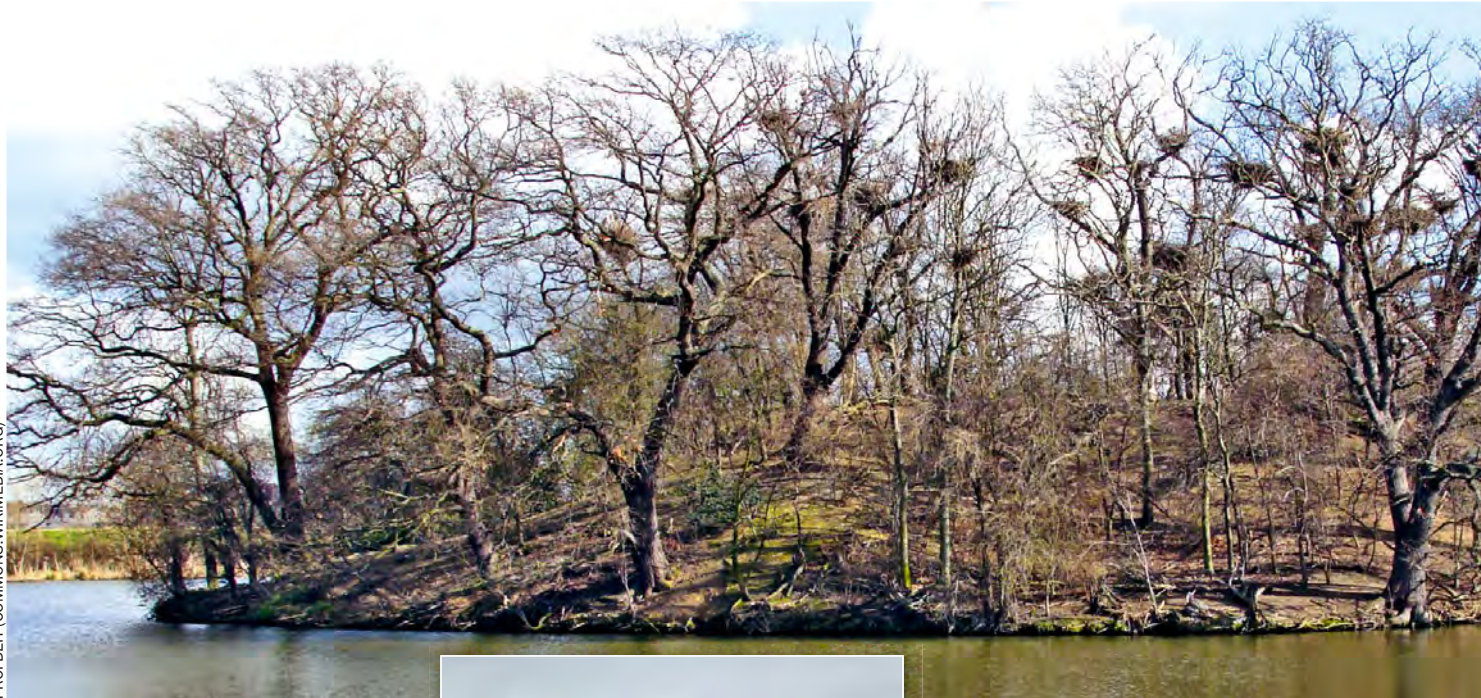
birds. The valley, while heavily urbanised and also industrialised in its lower regions, consists of an almost unbroken chain of green spaces, including woodland, marsh, wetland and reservoirs from the river's source in Leagrave, Bedfordshire, to the River Thames.

The nine separate reservoirs (five to the south and four to the north of Ferry Lane) cover 211 ha, and have been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because of their national importance to migratory and wintering waterbirds, particularly Shoveler and Gadwall – but also breeding Grey Heron, Cormorant and Tufted Duck.

The reservoirs lie entirely within a Special Protection Area (SPA) and are a RAMSAR site (particularly for the presence of wintering Bittern, as well as Shoveler and Gadwall), both indicating the international importance of the site – perhaps more so given its urban context. This status also gives the reservoirs legal protection, ensuring their biodiversity interests are maintained.

A visit to the reserve can also reveal Eurasian Teal congregating in their hundreds; Eurasian Wigeon occasionally visits, and Goosander and Common Goldeneye can be found with a little patience. It's not just the more familiar species that you'll find here, though; scarcer species that can occur at the right time of year include Red-crested Pochard, Garganey and Greater Scaup. On a good day you could see as many as a dozen duck species – and that's before you get to





PROFDEH (COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG)

the Kingfishers, geese, grebes, herons, Water Rails and other waterbirds.

Thames Water will continue operating the reservoirs as an important source of drinking water for London, while the London Wildlife Trust will undertake the day-to-day management of the wetlands, enhancing habitats for a wide range of species and ensuring that visitor numbers do not adversely affect the site's important wildlife. The site is intended to become a "first taste of nature" for local people, according to project leader David Mooney. To this end, there will be a major volunteering project and a concerted effort to get local schools involved.

New boardwalks will allow discreet public access at a safe distance from the habitats on site. Screening and hides will allow closer views. Some paths will be closed to the public at certain



PENNY DIXIE (WWW.PENNYDIXIE.CO.UK)

Built in 1894, the Marine Engine House is a beautiful example of Victorian architecture. It will be restored as a visitor centre, café, exhibition area, viewing terrace and educational space.

times of year to prevent disturbance. Educational resources will include guided walks and a visitor centre, allowing an urban population to understand and appreciate the importance of nature and wildlife.

Access will be restricted to set opening hours, though out-of-hours entrance to birders is being considered. The continuous presence of on-site staff should prevent the problem of vandalism to hides and other facilities which has occurred in the past. Measurements to improve populations of amphibians and invertebrates will be introduced, encouraging birds in turn, but the site will have to cope and reach compromises with the continued presence of anglers, too. However, there will be a strict ban on dogs, barbecues and swimming.

## Herons above

The heronry at Walthamstow Reservoirs is of national importance, and the number of pairs of Grey Heron now exceeds 100 in most years. Their raucous community accommodates an altogether more delicate and exotic relative: Little Egret. A true speciality of the reservoirs, in recent years Walthamstow Wetlands has become home to the only breeding colony in Greater London. While London records have increased in line with the egret's wider range expansion, it remains a scarce visitor to most wetlands, and there are only a handful of sites that are regularly favoured by the species.

The trails around the reservoirs offer unrivalled views of the Cormorant colony, one of the species' largest and most important breeding sites in Britain. At Walthamstow Wetlands the birds fulfil their seasonal cycle of courting, mating, nest-building and chick-rearing on the

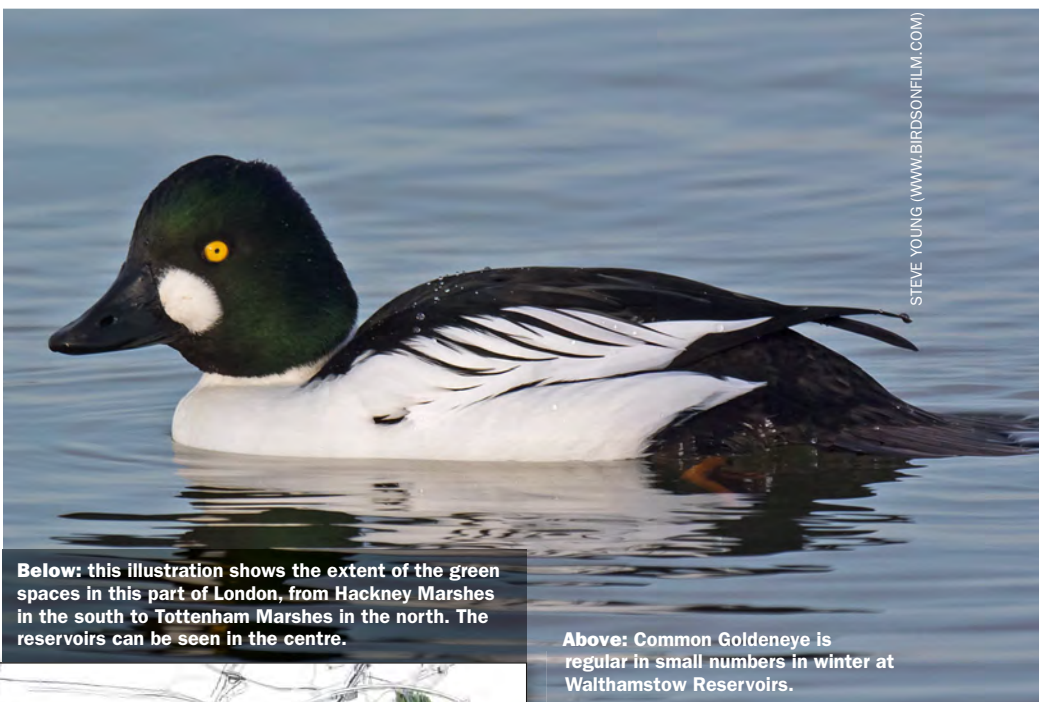
Great Crested Grebe currently breeds on the site, along with other waterfowl. Improvements will include additional islands to help increase habitats for waterbirds and support an increase in their number.



PENNY DIXIE (WWW.PENNYDIXIE.CO.UK)



The heronry is one of the largest in Britain, with pairs of Grey Heron exceeding 100 in most years. It has also attracted the first breeding Little Egrets in Greater London.



STEVE YOUNG (WWW.BIRDSONFILM.COM)

Below: this illustration shows the extent of the green spaces in this part of London, from Hackney Marshes in the south to Tottenham Marshes in the north. The reservoirs can be seen in the centre.

Above: Common Goldeneye is regular in small numbers in winter at Walthamstow Reservoirs.

more sparsely wooded islands.

Despite the open water of Walthamstow Reservoirs, and therefore their value for ducks, geese and occasional divers, they also support a variety of waders, although not in the numbers found on natural wetlands.

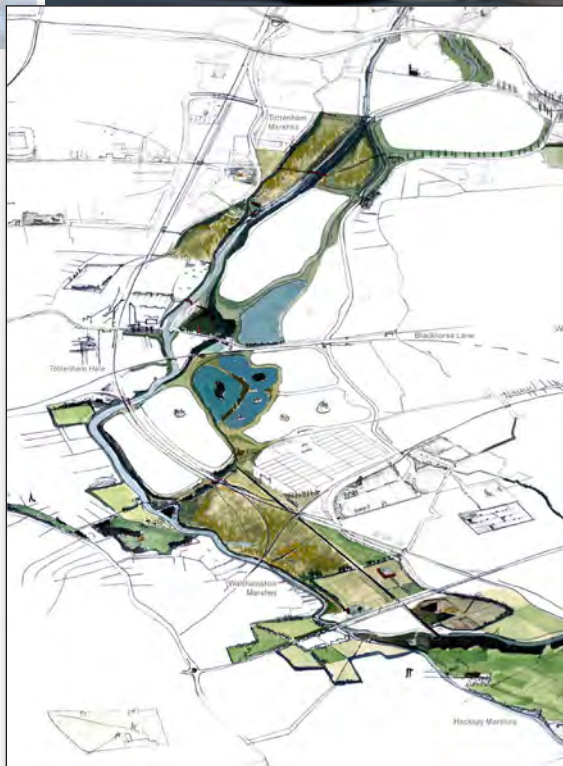
The northern group of reservoirs is traditionally the most attractive for shorebirds, notably the less disturbed and more 'natural' banks of Lockwood Reservoir. The habitat here includes areas of mud and shingle along an exposed shoreline – ideal for tempting down various waders on passage over London.

Regular visitors to the reservoirs include Green and Common Sandpipers, Dunlin, Common Redshank, Common Snipe, Oystercatcher and Northern Lapwing, while less commonly seen species include Ringed and Little Ringed Plovers, Eurasian Curlew, Ruff and Eurasian Whimbrel. The reservoirs have also had their fair share of rarities over the years, including Spotted and Pectoral Sandpipers from North America.

London Wildlife Trust aims to enhance and develop habitats at the reservoirs to encourage more waders to visit, and hopes to increase the areas of mud and shoreline available for them.

### Star bird

Bitterns becoming a star attraction at Walthamstow Wetlands is also a real possibility. The species' shy nature, effective camouflage and rarity can make it difficult to find, but Bitterns already winter regularly in numbers elsewhere in the Lea Valley. They require extensive, undisturbed



LONDON WILDLIFE TRUST

reedbeds, but a small, significant wintering population arrives from the Continent every autumn to take advantage of our more accommodating climate. The appearance of Bittern on site in recent years suggests that suitable habitat creation and management will help it in future.

Bittern is the flagship species for the first major ecological intervention at the reserve, which will involve creating extensive reedbeds on parts of Reservoirs 1, 2 and 3 on the south side, currently used to deposit silt from elsewhere on the site. More silt will be moved there to make the reservoirs shallow, piled behind underwater fences, and the resulting reedbeds will improve the habitat for wintering Bitterns as well as breeding Reed Warblers and Reed Buntings, and also encouraging

dragonflies. Over the next five years, a 2.2 ha reedbed should be established. Perhaps Walthamstow Wetlands will even encourage Bittern to breed in London one day.

Improvements are not solely limited to the site of the reservoirs. A grander vision will see a 'green' walking route from Stoke Newington Reservoirs (already a London Wildlife Trust reserve) to the south-west. It is even hoped that the whole site will eventually connect with larger reservoirs further to the north in the Lea Valley, which are already magnets for scarce wildfowl.

The management of Walthamstow Wetlands for wildlife as well as water can only be a boon for Londoners. Success in the long term hinges on the development of attractions for both public and wildlife in the first few years – let's hope these first small steps result

in the full realisation of this grand and biodiverse vision. ■

### VISITOR INFO

**WALTHAMSTOW** Wetlands will officially open to the public in 2017, but you can visit before then. A £1 day ticket, available from the Ranger's Office, is all you need to explore the site. Guided walks are occasionally organised; follow @WildWalthamstow on Twitter for details. To volunteer your services as a guide contact Rachel at walthamstow@wildlondon.org.uk. Due to construction works, some parts of the site may be closed for safety reasons. On-site facilities are currently fairly basic, but there is a pub by the entrance gate and cafés nearby.

The first phase of the Walthamstow Wetlands project is being funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Greater London Authority and Thames Water, with support from London Borough of Waltham Forest and London Wildlife Trust. For more information see: [www.walthamstow-wetlands.org.uk/visit/](http://www.walthamstow-wetlands.org.uk/visit/). ■





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# Dunlin, Curlew Sandpiper and White-rumped Sandpiper

## PHOTO GUIDE

1



HOWARD BOTTRELL (WWW.ECOVISUALS.COM)

**1 Dunlin, left, and Curlew Sandpiper (Upper Tamar Lake, Cornwall, 14 September 2006).** These two species are roughly similar in size and can often be seen together, though the former averages slightly smaller. This portrait enables the structural features of each to be compared. Although this particular Dunlin is a long-billed individual, its bill is still a fraction heavier at the tip and the base than that of the accompanying Curlew Sandpiper. Note also the latter's rather attenuated rear end and slightly longer exposed tibia.

### PROFILE



**ANDY STODDART** is Vice Chairman of the Rarities Committee and has many years' birding experience. He is also author of many ID papers and several books.

August is the month when waders begin returning in earnest, with early post-breeding adults and failed breeders followed by juveniles. Among the myriad identification difficulties presented will be those of the smaller calidrids, and here we examine three species with plenty of potential for confusion: Dunlin, Curlew Sandpiper and White-rumped Sandpiper. **Andy Stoddart** guides you through the pitfalls and diagnostic features of non-breeding plumages, so that you can pick out each with confidence at your favourite shorebird hot-spot.



# BASIC PRINCIPLES

**T**his article focuses on three small shorebirds: Dunlin, Curlew Sandpiper and White-rumped Sandpiper. The first is very common, the second scarce and the third rare though annual in small numbers. There is plenty of scope for confusion among them, particularly in non-breeding plumages.

## Dunlin

Dunlin is the commonest of all our small waders, and a regular passage migrant and winter visitor around our coasts, as well as a breeder in some of our upland areas.

This is the default small wader in Britain, but its near year-round presence masks a somewhat complex status. Three forms occur regularly. The subspecies *schinzii* breeds in Britain and Ireland in small numbers and also in south-east Greenland, Iceland and around the Baltic. It winters in West Africa. It is these birds that comprise many of our migrant Dunlin in spring and again in late summer and early autumn. Performing a similar migration is the north-east Greenland form *arctica*. In winter, however, our migrant Dunlin are replaced by larger numbers of wintering *alpina* from Scandinavia and north-west Russia.

## Curlew Sandpiper

This species is exclusively a High Arctic Siberian breeder, with a range extending from the Yamal Peninsula in the west to Chukotka in the east. It has an extensive winter range which stretches from West Africa to Australia. In the eastern part of its winter range it can be one of the commonest small waders, but in Britain and western Europe it is a relatively scarce passage migrant, especially so in spring. For most of

us this is a bird of autumn, occurring typically between July and October, with peak numbers in September.

Adults come first, mainly in August, while juveniles arrive in September. In most years numbers are modest, and mainly confined to eastern coasts, but some years – presumably of high breeding success – see much more significant influxes of juveniles. The species is exceptional in winter.

## White-rumped Sandpiper

This species breeds from northern Alaska east through northern Canada as far as Southampton Island. It is a very long-distance migrant, wintering in the south-east of South America, including the Falklands. Unsurprisingly, therefore, although still rare, it is among the commonest of the North American waders to reach Britain. There is also a small Siberian breeding population believed to be the source of many of our east coast records.

Two types of arrival can be discerned: an early autumn peak of adults, largely focused on North Sea coasts, and a late autumn peak of juveniles/first-winters with a more westerly distribution. This pattern suggests that at least some of our early autumn birds may have come on an eastern route.

By contrast, the arrival pattern of late autumn birds is far more suggestive of a direct transatlantic passage. Despite these occurrence patterns, however, this is a species which has the potential to occur anywhere in Britain (even inland) between July and November. Spring records are very few.

## Identification

Dunlin is the key species, and an understanding of its

distinctive ‘jizz’ and plumages is vital if we are to progress to finding its scarcer and rarer cousins. At all seasons, Dunlin presents a highly distinctive profile: pot bellied, round backed, hunched, neckless, rather droopy billed and a little truncated at the rear end. Even at range, this characteristic shape is striking once learned.

In spring, summer and early autumn, but depending on the form, a variable black belly is evident, as are ochre or more orange feather fringes in the mantle and scapulars. The form *schinzii* is dull with a small belly patch, moderate breast streaking and dull upperparts fringes, while the rarer *arctica* is small with pale and narrow upperparts fringes, reduced breast streaking and an even smaller belly patch. Both can look very different from the typically brighter *alpina*. This form shows a large and solid black belly patch, heavy breast streaking and bright orange upperparts fringes.

All forms wear rapidly, however, and the adults can just look dark by mid-summer. In winter adults and first-winter birds, the typical drab ‘mud-brown and white’ appearance is the norm. Juveniles are crisply marked above, with clear pale feather fringes and, unusually in small waders, distinctive smudgy black blobs along the upper flanks, though these disappear during the autumn as the birds moult into their first-winter plumage. The call is easily learnt – a rather drawn-out descending *treeep*.

Curlew Sandpiper is best picked out on size and jizz. Compared with Dunlin, it is larger and characteristically longer and slimmer billed, longer legged and slimmer bodied – altogether a much more elegant bird. Summer adults are stunning, with fiery

orange heads and underparts recalling that other High Arctic Siberian wader, Bar-tailed Godwit.

Winter adults and first-winters are plain grey-brown above and white below, much more like a Dunlin, and are best identified by structural characters. Juveniles are very different, however: bright white below, peachy breasted and marked above with beautiful crisp, ‘frosty’ white feather fringes. Although rarely necessary to secure an identification, a flight view will show a prominent square white rump patch. The call is a distinctive rich *chreet*.

White-rumped Sandpiper is a little smaller than Dunlin, but still significantly larger than the otherwise similar stints. Its bill is short and its legs generally appear short to medium length (though this is partly an effect of their stance, for they can sometimes look surprisingly long in the leg).

Most striking is the shape of the back end: long and slim with a good projection of primaries beyond both the tips of the tertials and the tail-tip. Summer adults have pale rufous feather fringes in the crown and upperparts and streaks and arrowhead markings in the flanks leading back from a streaky breast-band.

Winter adults and first-winters are, like all of our trio, a somewhat anonymous greyish colour, but juveniles are beautifully marked with white and rufous fringes in the upperparts and a narrow, stint-like ‘V’ at the mantle sides. Limited streaking in the flanks is present in all plumages. The clinching feature is the narrow band of white across the uppertail coverts. Despite its name, this species is not white rumped! The call is a thin, high-pitched *jeet*. ■



2



**2 Juvenile Dunlin (Salthouse, Norfolk, 12 September 2005).**

This young Dunlin shows the typical rather hunched, almost neckless posture, thick-looking bill and short rear end. Its wing feathers are fully juvenile with neat pale fringes forming a scaly pattern, but new grey adult-type feathers are already present in the scapulars and the mantle. This appearance is typical of birds in the transitional stage from juvenile to first-winter plumage. Note also the prominent blurry dark spotting in the underparts, a characteristic feature of juvenile Dunlin.

3



**3 Juvenile Curlew Sandpiper (Terschelling, The Netherlands, 1 September 2008).**

In this beautiful portrait, note the elegant proportions created by the long, slim, fine-tipped bill and the slight primary projection beyond the tail-tip creating a somewhat attenuated rear end. Equally striking is the crisp, frosty appearance to the whole of the upperparts, each feather having a neat whitish fringe. With no grey adult-type feathers yet appearing above, this bird is in full juvenile plumage. Note also that, in contrast with juvenile Dunlin, the underparts are a pure, clean white with just a peachy flush to the breast.

4



**4 Juvenile White-rumped Sandpiper (São Miguel, Azores, 10 October 2012).**

The relatively stumpy bill, shortish legs and very long rear end with the primary tips extending well beyond both the tail-tip and the tertials identify this as a White-rumped Sandpiper. The crisply patterned wing feathers age it as a juvenile but, as with the Dunlin in image 2, the moult to first-winter plumage is well under way, with most of the rusty-fringed mantle and scapular feathers already replaced with dull grey adult-type feathers. Also visible here is fine streaking in the upper flanks – a typical character of White-rumped Sandpiper at all ages.



5



ALAN TATE

## 5 Adult Dunlin (Salthouse, Norfolk, 11 September 2005).

This bird shows the species' typical dumpy, rotund and neckless outline. It is an adult nearing the end of the moult to its characteristically rather plain greyish winter plumage, although some traces of its summer finery can still be seen in the rusty hues in the crown sides and ear coverts, and also in the orange tips to the few remaining summer plumage upper scapulars.

6



CARLOS BOCOS

## 6 Adult Curlew Sandpiper (Doha, Qatar, 29 December 2014).

This individual is in full winter plumage. Although looking essentially plain grey and somewhat featureless, it is still separable from Dunlin even without a flight view. Very obvious here are its slim, fine-tipped bill, slightly attenuated rear end and long legs with plenty of exposed tibia. Most Curlew Sandpipers seen in Britain are summer plumage adults in early autumn and juveniles in mid-autumn, so birds like this are most likely to be encountered on a winter foreign holiday.



7



DOMINIC MITCHELL (WWW.BIRDINGETC.COM)

**7 Adult White-rumped Sandpiper (Flores, Azores, 14 October 2013).**

The really long primary projection is the most immediately striking feature of this bird, extending noticeably beyond the tail-tip and especially so beyond the tip of the longest tertial. The shortish legs and short bill add further confirmation that this is a White-rumped Sandpiper. Once moulted into winter plumage, autumn adults are typically, as here, a rather dull and uniform grey, but note the presence of fine streaking in the upper flanks leading back from the breast streaking – a pattern never shown by either Dunlin or Curlew Sandpiper.

8



JULIAN HOUGH

**8 Adult White-rumped Sandpiper (Connecticut, USA, 4 July 2011).**

Even in breeding plumage this species is a relatively subdued creature, but there are subtle rusty hues here in the crown and ear coverts and also in the fringes to the mantle and scapular feathers. Perhaps most obvious yet again is the fine streaking in the flanks on this individual, extending to the rear flanks as well. Confirmation of this bird's identity is provided by the shortish bill and, most importantly, by the long primary projection giving the typically strongly attenuated rear end.



9



**9 Juvenile Dunlin (Seaforth, Lancashire, 28 August 2010).**

The warm buff plumage hues, crisp fringes to the wing coverts and prominent blurry blackish spotting in the underparts are sufficient to identify this bird as a young Dunlin. Its dumpy, unremarkable proportions are also evident here. It would, however, need to turn around a little to reveal the prominent dark centre to its rump and uppertail coverts – a feature common to most small calidrids, but not to either of the two confusion species discussed here.

STEVE YOUNG (WWW.BIRDSONFILM.COM)

10



**10 Juvenile Curlew Sandpiper (Cuckmere, East Sussex, 10 September 2012).**

This 'wings up' Curlew Sandpiper is showing off its characteristic white rump. Typically, this patch is quite extensive, covering both the lower rump and the uppertail coverts, and it appears in flight as a large square patch. The longish, fine-tipped bill adds further confirmation of its identity, while the peachy flush to the breast and the just-visible scaly-looking upper mantle identify it as a fresh autumn juvenile.

PETER WILSON



11



BRETT SPENCER

**11 White-rumped Sandpiper (right) and Dunlin (Lodmoor, Dorset, 17 July 2013).**

These two species can look remarkably similar, but note the former's rather short-looking bill, slightly weak-looking wing-bar and, most obviously, a narrow white 'rump' – actually restricted to a white 'horseshoe' across the uppertail coverts, which contrasts sharply with a rather 'stuck-on'-looking dark tail.

12



STEFAN PFÜTZKE (WWW.GREEN-LENS.DE)

**12 Juvenile White-rumped Sandpiper (Terceira, Azores, 21 October 2012).**

This individual is showing off its rear to better effect. Note that the rump itself is actually dark and that it is only the uppertail coverts which are white. The resultant white 'band' therefore sits across the base of the tail and contrasts very sharply with the blackish tail-feathers. A short-looking bill and rather weak upperwing bar are also visible here.



# Where to find your own

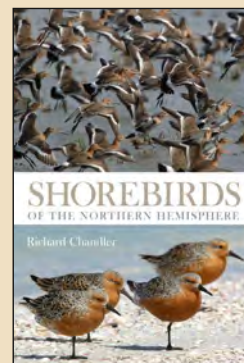
**DUNLIN** is one of our most numerous waders, and can be found in huge flocks in winter at many coastal mudflats on any river estuary. When the tide is in, birds can form substantial roosts, and can also be seen in smaller groups flying along the shoreline between sites. The locations of roosts are sometimes traditional, but can also change depending on conditions. On migration it is plentiful, and can also turn up inland, even on small reservoirs and gravel pits from time to time. Often as not in these kinds of locations, familiarity with its call will alert you to a bird's presence, as the species is easily flushed. As Dunlin is the default small calidrid, virtually any wetland reserve close to the coast with some exposed mud should produce birds in autumn.

It is during migration that Dunlin flocks are also likely to pull in the odd Curlew Sandpiper and even White-rumped Sandpiper on occasion. **Curlew Sandpiper** is less likely inland due to both scarcity and habits, but good sites for the species in late summer and autumn include Pennington Marshes, Hants (SZ 3292), Rye Harbour NR, East Sussex (TQ 9318), Oare Marshes KWT (TR 0064) and Cliffe Pools

RSPB (TQ 7176), Kent, Minsmere RSPB, Suffolk (TM 4766), Titchwell RSPB (TF 7544) and Snettisham RSPB (TF 6432), Norfolk, Frodsham Marsh, Cheshire (SJ 5078), Leighton Moss RSPB, Lancashire (SD 4775), Musselburgh Lagoons, Lothian (NT 3573) and Belfast Lough RSPB, Co Antrim (J 3675); many other sites can also produce the species in small numbers.

**White-rumped Sandpiper**, though very scarce, is expected in small numbers each autumn, so it is good to always have the species on your radar if visiting a coastal wader hot-spot, particularly if water levels are low and there has been some national shorebird movement. There are no really regular sites for the species, but recent records have been from sites as widespread as Tresco, Scilly (SV 8914), Beacon Ponds, East Yorkshire (TA 4117), Frampton Marsh RSPB, Lincolnshire (TF 3538), Cley Marshes NWT, Norfolk (TG 0544) and Papa Westray, Orkney (HY 4952). Owing to the species having a small breeding population in eastern Siberia as well as North America, individuals are almost as likely to turn up on either coast, despite its reputation as a 'Yank'. ■

## FURTHER READING



**Shorebirds of the Northern Hemisphere** by Richard Chandler (Christopher Helm)

Covering all the species of the northern hemisphere, this photographic guide provides all the information a birder will need to identify those challenging waders. Superbly illustrated with colour photography by the author, *Shorebirds of the Northern Hemisphere* focuses on specific and subspecific separation and on ageing to provide a complete identification resource. Some 135 species are included, covering all species that breed in the region or that occur as non-breeding birds.

■ Buy for just £26.99, or £25.99 to subscribers; SRP £29.99.

To order see page 77, call 020 8881 0550 or visit the Birdwatch Bookshop at [www.birdwatch.co.uk/store](http://www.birdwatch.co.uk/store).

# ? Quiz bird

**SCOPING** the scrape while visiting a coastal reserve during the first wave of wader migration, you note a small brownish calidrid with a slightly decurved bill. Dunlin is the most likely, but there is always the potential for it to be one of the scarcer or rarer species.

You try to age the bird first, before fully addressing its species, and begin to assess the streaking, distribution of colour, proportions and shape and length of bill, before you come to conclusion.

## How to enter

Once you think you have the right answer, let us know the identity of the bird in this photo at [bit.ly/bw278CalidridQuiz](http://bit.ly/bw278CalidridQuiz). Be quick, though, as the competition closes on 7 August! The answer will be available online at [www.birdwatch.co.uk/win](http://www.birdwatch.co.uk/win) from 10 August, and the first randomly chosen reader with the correct answer will win a copy of *The Urban Birder* (published by New Holland). ■





# Birders of paradise

Papua New Guinea has 38 of the world's 43 bird-of-paradise species, as well as a plethora of endemics for the visiting birder.

**F**ew birders can have grown up without having watched David Attenborough's captivating encounters with birds-of-paradise in Papua New Guinea (PNG) on the BBC, as their dramatic displays and plumage have featured in several of his popular and award-winning wildlife TV series.

Such scenes must have seemed a universe away from one's own personal birding experiences 'back in the day', but are now more accessible than ever owing to the continuing expansion of airline routes and the gradual opening up of PNG to tourists over the last few decades.

But – though they would be enough – it's more than just the birds-of-paradise that are luring more birders than ever to the often unspoilt tropical habitats of the island nation. PNG is home to at least 76 endemics – many unique and legendary – among its 781 species, and even the capital Port Moresby has logged more than 400 species within two and a half hours of its centre.

A trip to PNG could net visiting birders both quality and quantity. The island holds 38 of the world's birds-of-paradise – including that Attenborough favourite, Raggiana – nine of which are endemic, including Goldie's and Emperor.

Ten species of bowerbird can also be found, including the astonishing Flame Bowerbird, as well as Firemaned and MacGregor's. Other passerines included multiple munias, woodswallows, drongos, honeyeaters, white-eyes, pittas, flowerpeckers and berrypeckers – an assemblage that is loud in both colour and sound.

## Extraordinary diversity

This feathered feast is not just restricted to songbirds. One of the Dodo's nearest relatives, the almost absurd-looking Victoria Crowned Pigeon with its lacy crest, maroon breast and rich blue plumage, is still fairly well distributed, though localised. The stranger and even more Dodo-like Nicobar Pigeon can be found offshore. In fact, PNG as a whole has 54 pigeon species, including five found nowhere else.

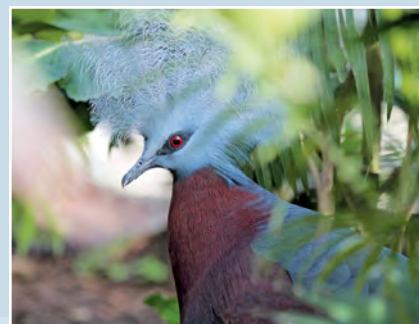
A broad selection of raptors can also be seen, including the endemic Slaty-mantled and New Britain Goshawks, along with New Guinea and Gurney's Eagles. Several scrub-fowl species haunt the jungles, while 20 species of rail and crake call in the swamps. There are 48 species of parrot that make the country their home, and these include endemics such as Blue-eyed Cockatoo, Purple-bellied and White-naped Lorries, Red-chinned Lorikeet and Meek's Pygmy Parrot, as well as a myriad of gaudy but more widespread fig-parrots and hanging-parrots.

Despite the encroachments of the modern world, PNG still has undiscovered areas particularly in the central mountain chain, which is still well forested, and roads are few and far between. Most travel in the country is by air or on foot, and visiting birders will inevitably be wandering 'off the beaten track' at times. That said, there are also several well-accommodated eco-lodges and accessible reserves, situated to get the most possible out of a stay, with expert guides able to take you to see the most notable target species.

PNG's rich and varied habitats, from



The startling Raggiana Bird-of-Paradise is one of the main draws to PNG, but there are 37 more species of this illustrious family there.



Victoria Crowned Pigeon is another ostentatious PNG speciality, and is closely related to the now famously extinct Dodo.

## VISITING

- UK tour operator Wildlife Worldwide specialise in birdwatching in PNG and a sample itinerary and more information can be found at [www.wildlifeworldwide.com/discover/papua-new-guinea](http://www.wildlifeworldwide.com/discover/papua-new-guinea)

beach to montane rainforest, mean that a birding trip there will result in a long and varied trip list, numerous sightings of extraordinary unique species and memories that will live on in your mind forever. ■



**Main picture:** Tari in the Southern Highlands holds many species of interest, including Brehm's Tiger Parrot, Mountain Yellow-billed Kingfisher, numerous birds-of-paradise and Brown Sicklebill, the male of which (pictured right) can grow to 96 cm including its ostentatious tail plumes.



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# On the move

As the autumn seawatching season begins in earnest, *David Callahan* presents your guide to the best sites and what species to expect in which conditions.

**W**hile many will be visiting coastal headlands during late summer and early autumn in the hope of seeing scarce or rare vagrants or some visible migration, hardy and sharp-eyed birders will be staking out such promontories to seawatch, hoping for movements of our enigmatic seabirds, or even better, the chance of a roaming rarity within scoping distance.

Hunched against the wind and elements, seawatchers have to be patient and intuitive, with hard-won experience granting the ability to lock on to an unusual bird by a mere inflection of jizz, flight style or the hint of a single diagnostic feature. A great local seawatching site will attract both zen masters and eager students, but most will share information and come to an agreement over how to divide up the horizon and foreground to point out where a bird of interest might be.

However, forewarned is forearmed, and choosing where to start your prolonged stake-out will involve local gen, of which timing and weather conditions will provide the likelihood of the best sightings. Such decisions become nuanced with accumulating knowledge, but you can use this seasonal seawatching almanac to get a good idea of where and when it might be best to visit.

## South-West

The South-West, and the tip of Cornwall in particular, is almost certainly the best seawatching locale in Britain, and most of the

headlands are well known and well attended once the season starts in earnest in late July. Good birds can be seen well into winter, with the constituent species varying as the autumn develops.

**Gwennap Head** at **Porthgwarra** and **Pendeen**, both in **Cornwall**, are often viewed as twin sites, and which is best depends on the wind direction – the former is better when the wind is between the south-west and south-east, and the latter when it's westerly. Both are among the best sites for Cory's Shearwater.

On the north coast of the Penwith peninsula, **St Ives** is most productive – and occasionally legendary – during north-west and northerly winds, particularly following south-westerlies. **Cape Cornwall** and **The Lizard** are good, too, but comparatively underwatched owing to the reputation of their neighbours.

Visitors to **Scilly** in autumn may well be concentrating on landbird migrants, but the seawatching can be especially good for the same reasons – the islands are out in the Atlantic and are the most southerly and westerly point of Britain.

As seabirds move in the Channel, **Devon** sites such as **Berry Head** and **Start Point** come into their own, with an enviable list of rarities, and regular sightings of species such as Sabine's Gull and Balearic Shearwater in early to mid-autumn. **Hartland Point**, north Devon, is another

less well known site that has had impressive counts of various shearwater species.

## Wales

In general, south-west winds serve Welsh seawatching sites the best. Due to the lack of shelter, **Worms Head**, **Glamorgan**, can be considered underwatched but has still turned up numbers of skuas, Sabine's Gull, and European and Leach's Storm-petrels.

**Strumble Head**, **Pembrokeshire**, is probably the best seawatching site in Wales, with occasional day-counts of skuas into three figures. Common Scoter is regular in large flocks, while scarce shearwaters are often tallied among impressive Manx counts in August and September.

The **Lleyn Peninsula**, **Caernarfonshire**, is good for Sooty Shearwaters in September, along with Leach's Storm-petrel into October. Sabine's Gull has been noted, and there are even records of Barolo Shearwater and Fea's-type Petrel.

**Anglesey** is the southernmost breeding site for Black Guillemot, so keep a lookout for this species offshore. **Point Lynas** and **South Stack** both have good reputations for seabirds, with Northern Gannet, Kittiwake,

While some watchpoints have hides from which to observe seabirds, many locations – such as the beach at Cley, Norfolk, pictured here – will involve prolonged and exposed outdoor vigils in quite wet and windy conditions, so be prepared and try to find some shelter, wherever possible.







STEVE YOUNG (WWW.BIRDSONFILM.COM)

Leach's Storm-petrels are on the move from late September to November, and can almost be guaranteed from some sites in the North-West, when there is onshore winds and rain.

Razorbill and Common Guillemot dominating, but a good chance of skuas and divers as the season matures, as well as something rarer.

## North-West

This region's speciality is Leach's Storm-petrel. There are several parts of the coast where good numbers pass during October and November, and birds can be seen on the Cheshire and Lancashire coasts, sometimes with ease.

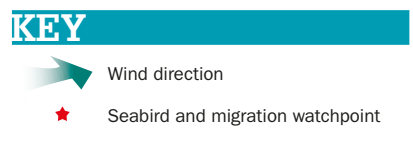
On the **Wirral Peninsula**, **New Brighton** has produced this species, Sabine's Gull and Long-tailed Skua among others in autumns past, and a similar line-up can be expected in north-westerlies at **Hilbre Island**, in the mouth of the Dee Estuary (though note the island is only accessible at low tide).

**Lancashire** also has some good locations, again usually best in north-westerly winds in autumn. **Heysham Power Station** has an outfall attracting terns and gulls and turning up all sorts of oddities in west-south-west to west-north-west winds, while **Formby Point** has a coastguard building providing shelter and views of the majority of British seabirds, with notable numbers of skuas, auks and shearwaters in gales, while Common Scoter and Red-throated Diver are regular offshore. There is also a large high tide wader roost to scan, and early autumn terns have included Roseate and even Forster's.

**Rossall** also has a coastguard building to watch from, and like **Blackpool** further down the coast, is often productive in southerly and south-westerly winds, though even calm conditions have given up good birds.

## Scotland

As the southern species circulate into the North Sea later in autumn and Arctic species disperse south, Scotland can shine as a seawatching location. Black Guillemot is a something of a Scottish speciality, and can be seen from some of the sites listed below.





## ABOUT THIS MAP

This map shows the prevailing and/or ideal wind directions likely to produce visible seabird movements in coastal waters around Britain and Ireland, where they are most likely to be noted off prominent headlands. Site and regional conditions can vary, and birders are always advised to seek news from knowledgeable national and local sources. BirdGuides.com acts as a resource containing all the most recent reports.

Map contains Ordnance Survey data  
© Crown copyright and database right 2015.

Black 'Guillies' breed in Dumfries and Galloway and are always worth looking for offshore. **Corsewall Point** is that county's finest site, and should produce European Storm-petrel, Sabine's Gull, and skuas, Northern Gannet and shearwaters.

The **Outer Hebrides** provides many suitable seawatching vantage points. Try the **Butt of Lewis**, or farther south **Scolpaig/Griminish Point, North Uist**, and **Rubha Ardvule on South Uist**. These can all provide close views of Sabine's Gull and Leach's Storm-petrel right through the season in onshore winds. **Aird an Rùnaire on North Uist**, and also **Tiree**, can produce spectacular passages of Long-tailed and Pomarine Skuas, while departing British breeding seabirds abound in late summer and early autumn.

Most autumn visitors to **Shetland** will be searching for that elusive landbird vagrant, but the archipelago's position between the Atlantic and North Sea means there are good places to scan the sea. **Wats Ness, Mainland**, is particularly notable for its skua passage, which can include dramatic numbers of Long-tailed and Pomarine. **Orkney**, too, has good spots; with the wind in the west to north-west try the **Brough of Birsay, Mainland**, for thousands of Northern Fulmars, all four skuas, Manx and Sooty Shearwaters, both regular storm-petrels and, later in the season, a chance of Little Auk. If the wind is coming from the south-east or east, head over to **Point of Ayr, Deerness, Mainland**, for a similar selection of species.

Coastal sites such as **Handa and Brora, Sutherland**, **Tarbat Ness, Ross-shire**, and **Findhorn Bay and Burghead, Inverness-shire**, are all great watchpoints. **The Moray Firth, Highland**, witnesses huge

tern movements with attendant Arctic Skuas, while the ever-present Northern Gannets put on a mass diving display, Manx Shearwaters ride the air currents just above the waves, and their Sooty cousins are regularly seen. **Moss Point and Chanonry Point, Highland**, are also productive, while **Rattray Head, Aberdeenshire**, provides a good selection of skuas, waders, seaduck, divers, geese and grebes, and has records of Cory's and Great Shearwaters among the Manxies. In the latter county and easily accessible from Aberdeen lies **Girdle Ness**, another notable seawatching site.

Further south, **Fife Ness** and the **Isle of May, Fife**, can be very productive, with Manx and Sooty Shearwaters, skuas and divers all moving in numbers, and later Sabine's and white-winged gulls and auks, including Little Auk after northerlies, will all be seen.

## North-East

**Annstead Point at Seahouses, Northumberland**, is the most under-appreciated seawatching location in the county, and only lack of coverage has prevented it from adding more scarce and rare species to the countless Manx Shearwaters and Puffins present, depending on the time of year. The shelter provided helps protect observers from onshore winds which bring the best views. Sooty Shearwater can be seen from late July into September, while all three divers may pass, and such semi-precious and precious gems as Red-necked Grebe and Barolo Shearwater have been recorded.

**Church Point, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, Northumberland**, is another north-eastern hot-spot which has a very small brick shelter. Similar species occur, and in season this part of the North Sea always provides a chance of Roseate



Sooty Shearwaters circle the North Atlantic in late summer, and can reach the east coast by August, when this bird was photographed off the coast of Northumberland.

MARTIN KITCHING





STEF MCELWEE

**Little Auks** begin to appear from the end of October and can sometimes be seen in numbers during a 'wreck', when thousands move south en masse, and can be counted from headlands, usually situated on the east coast. Such movements often also produce a few inland records.

Tern owing to the county's breeding colony at Coquet Island.

Like much of the east coast, **St Mary's Lighthouse, Tyneside**, is a good place to count Little Auks in an influx year, while waders in substantial flocks, significant skua and Kittiwake passage, seaduck and auks can all be expected. There is a chance of Sabine's Gull and Roseate and Black Terns, plus the occasional rare shearwater.

**Yorkshire** also has some internationally noted watchpoints. Perhaps chief among these is **Flamborough Head**, the closest rival in quality to west Cornwall. The site is great well into winter, but like everywhere else, autumn is the main event. Most seawatching is done from the point, and there can be large movements of shearwaters with occasional appearances of the rarer species. Day counts of Arctic Skua have topped 1,000, while there have been up to 350 Long-tailed. Winds from the northern quarter are best, but if they're from the east you might be distracted by landbird arrivals.

Another great seawatching projection into the North Sea is **Filey Brigg**, which is usually productive under similar conditions to Flamborough, though easterlies can also drive movements within sight. **Long Nab, Burniston**, is the most northern of these Yorkshire sites, and the same movements and birds may be seen here first under the same weather and climatic conditions, and often more closely inshore, before they are driven further out as they pass Scarborough.

**Spurn Point** gets similar numbers and species to Flamborough under similar conditions, though there is sometimes more wader traffic. While seabird movements often happen first thing, large numbers of terns can occur in the evening; all four skuas are possible, with Long-tailed the least likely. Shelter can be a problem – there is a long history of seawatching huts being washed away by the tide since 1965.

## East Anglia

The entire stretch of the north **Norfolk** coast can be worth an early morning seawatching session, though many observations come from **Cley**, partly due to the popularity of the nationally renowned nature reserve there. Northerly winds will blow seabirds towards the north-facing beaches before they turn and follow the coast, where – despite the lack of height in most places – good views can sometimes be had. **Hunstanton** to the west and **Sheringham** to east have the advantage of both seafront shelters and height.

Passage seabirds might be detected anywhere around the East Anglian coast, notwithstanding the general lack of geographical features to concentrate movements close to the shore. Further on still, in bad weather seabirds will enter and sometimes linger in the Thames Estuary, where **Southend Pier** and **Canvey Coastguards, Essex**, are the best (though somewhat hit-and-miss) on the north side, and **Shellness** and **Reculver, Kent**, on the south shore. These last two north-facing sites become better as autumn progresses, providing skua

and occasional shearwater sightings as well as Leach's Storm-petrels in strong north-westerlies; in between the two locations, Britain's only Tufted Puffin was found by a skua-watcher on one notable day in September 2009.

## South coast

Movements up and down the English Channel can be observed from several south coast promontories, and will usually feature many Northern Gannets and the more regular auks, while Kittiwakes and the odd Northern Fulmar will also be seen, with good movements of Common Scoter and the occasional Velvet into winter.

**Dungeness** is the county's most well-known seawatching site and has two hides (one locked) to observe seabird movements as birds round the tip of this vast shingle point. 'The patch', a warm upwelling of waste water from the nuclear power station, attracts many gulls and terns, including frequent scarcities. Pomarine Skua passage is marked in spring, but it can also occur in autumn along with the two more likely species.

**Selsey Bill, West Sussex**, is one of the best sites to observe Balearic Shearwater, with up to 20 being noted in August, while Manx is quite frequent. Southerly gales can bring the likes of Sooty Shearwater, Grey Phalarope, Little Gull, Black Tern and Great and Arctic Skuas. Sabine's Gull and Long-tailed Skua are possible into September, while Sooty Shearwater can move past in double figures in October.

**Portland Bill, Dorset**, is the best vantage point on the south coast for seabirds, and the presence of sheltered zones such as The Fleet and Ferrybridge can see scarce species such as Sabine's Gull, Grey Phalarope and Little Auk seeking refuge from stormy weather. The less regular gulls and terns should be searched for among the numerous commoner species which will



**Sabine's Gull** can be the making of many a seawatch on any coast around Britain and Ireland, being scarce enough to generate self-found excitement but frequent enough to be a realistic prospect.

STEVE YOUNG (WWW.BIRDSONFILM.COM)



be both lingering and passing through, while other pelagic species may also be offshore. Chesil Cove should be checked for sheltering storm-petrels.

## Ireland

Ireland's position to the west of Britain means that it catches the full force of the greatest seabird movements out in the Atlantic Ocean, and its best sites are often key destinations for birders from both countries. The relatively small population also means that there is plenty of room for pioneering watches from under-attended headlands. However, there are a few key watchpoints that should be well on the radar by now.

On Ireland's east coast is **Carnsore Point, Co Wexford**, which witnesses huge flocks of Manx Shearwaters in August, among which (in order of likelihood) may be Balearic, Sooty, Great and Cory's Shearwaters. Plenty of post-breeding gatherings of Common and Arctic Terns will lure in skuas, including the odd Long-tailed as autumn progresses, while strong east or south-east winds later in the season will blow in Grey Phalarope and Sabine's Gull. As winter looms, large auk flocks

can occur, while seaduck and Little Gull may also be logged.

The west coast has the most scope for rarities by reputation, and chief among many good sites is **Bridges of Ross, Co Clare**. One of the best sites in Europe, considerable numbers of similar species to Carnsore Point may be seen during the more productive winds from the north-west, west or south-west. Puffin is likely among the auks in August, while Sooty Shearwaters may reach triple figures and Wilson's Storm-petrel is annual among the Europeans. The last 10 days of August are renowned for producing Fea's-type Petrels and Barolo Shearwater, while later in autumn, you can expect Leach's Storm-petrel and divers, and numerous common and scarce seabird species.

**Bloody Foreland, Co Donegal**, and **Kilcummin Head, Co Mayo**, can log a similar list of scarcities and large numbers of common species – try the former in strong north-west to north-east winds following depressions, while the latter also favours the northern sector, particularly following any low-pressure systems that pass between Iceland and Ireland. Try **Slyne Head Peninsula**,

**Co Galway**, if you want to break a little new ground – record day counts of Sooty and large shearwaters have been had there, along with large numbers of Pomarine and Long-tailed Skuas.

In fact there are dozens of great seawatching sites in Ireland, and the country is ripe for pioneering vigils, but special mention must be made of the far south-west of Co Cork, which can be excitingly productive for the same reasons as west Cornwall. Conditions with north-west winds with intermittent showers in particular can send dramatically large seabirds movements to within scope distance, either passing the headlands or heading back out to sea from the many bays and inlets. Even better are south and south-west winds emanating from low-pressure systems in the Atlantic – in fact any southerly blow can be worth attending to. Other locations also have their advantages, but the best from north-west to south-west are **Dursey Island/Garinish Point, Mizen Head, Cape Clear Island, Galley Head, the Old Head of Kinsale and Knockadoon Head**, while those keen on more underwatched sites could try **Toe Head** or **Seven Heads**. ■



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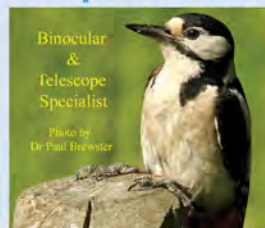


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KEYNOTES



*James Currie*

A native of South Africa,  
conservationist, lifelong  
birder and host of Nikon's  
Birding Adventures TV.



*Gallus Quigley*

Expert birder and  
Trails Specialist with  
the Lake County Parks  
& Trails Division



*Melinda Myers*

Contributing editor for "Birds &  
Blooms" magazine and host of  
"Melinda's Garden Moment"  
TV and radio program

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# Florida

## LAKE COUNTY'S WINGS AND WILDFLOWERS FESTIVAL

road and trail. The 4.3-mile driving trail is unique as it allows birders to be in the middle of a wetland habitat. It is located between state roads 42 and 44, on the east side of Lake Griffin and west of County Road 452.

### Lake Apopka Northshore

Located on the border of Lake and Orange Counties, this 19,800-acre restoration area was targeted for clean-up as Lake Apopka is in the headwaters of the Ocklawaha River. Clay Island is a small portion of the entire area and is located in Lake County. During an annual bird count in 1998, more than 170 species were seen along the 5.7-mile trail loop, the highest total for an inland species count in 100 years. Species diversity continues to raise the area's profile, as more than 365 have now been logged. The site can be found between County Road 48 and State Road 455, west of Lake Apopka.

### Birding festival

Lake County is also home to the annual Wings & Wildflowers Festival, which this year will be held from 2-4 October at Venetian Gardens in Leesburg. Keynote speakers are: James Currie of Birding Adventures TV, host and producer of the popular birding TV show *Nikon's Birding Adventures*; Gallus Quigley, Lake County's resident birding expert and Cornell's regional eBird co-ordinator for Lake and Sumter counties; and Melinda Myers, expert gardener and contributing editor of *Birds & Blooms* magazine. ■

## CENTRAL FLORIDA

### Getting there

- There are frequent direct flights between Orlando and major UK airports.
- Lake County is 45 minutes from Orlando and Walt Disney World, and just one hour from Florida's east and west coasts.

### Contacts

- Lake County Tourism: phone +1 (352) 742 3918 or visit [www.visitlakefl.com](http://www.visitlakefl.com) or [www.wingsandwildflowers.com](http://www.wingsandwildflowers.com).
- Lake County Parks and Trails Division: [www.lakecountyfl.gov/parks](http://www.lakecountyfl.gov/parks).

### Further reading and resources

- *Field Guide to the Birds of Eastern North America* by David Sibley (Helm, £19.99) – order from £17.99 from Birdwatch Bookshop ([bit.ly/bw267Sibley](http://bit.ly/bw267Sibley)).
- Florida Birding Trail: [www.floridabirdingtrail.com](http://www.floridabirdingtrail.com).
- Florida Ornithological Society: [www.fosbirds.org](http://www.fosbirds.org).
- Florida Scrub-Jay Trail: [www.wingsandwildflowers.com/Birding/FloridaScrubJayTrail](http://www.wingsandwildflowers.com/Birding/FloridaScrubJayTrail).

**F**lorida's mix of habitats, climate and proximity to the Caribbean means it boasts a diversity of birds unmatched elsewhere in North America. What's more, you don't have to go as far as the Keys or the Everglades for some prime birding – central Florida has plenty to offer, not least in Lake County, just 45 minutes from Orlando.

### Habitats

Lake County has thousands of acres of reserves and parklands, including the Lake Apopka Restoration Area, Ferndale Preserve, Emerald Marsh and the Hilochee Wildlife Management Area. Taking its name from the area's 1,000 lakes and rivers, the county is surrounded by environmentally protected areas including the Green Swamp to the south, the Ocala National Forest to the north and the Wekiva River Basin to the east.

### Birds

Some 275 species have been recorded in Lake County, and key among them is the state's eponymous scrub-jay, found only in central Florida. This endemic species is restricted to a mosaic of small areas that have dry, sandy soil with young, scrubby oak trees. Other key target species for visitors include Black-

bellied and Fulvous Whistling Ducks, Mottled Duck, Bald Eagle, Short-tailed Hawk, Swallow-tailed and Snail Kites, Black Rail, Sandhill Crane, Limpkin, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Yellow-throated, Pine and Prothonotary Warblers, and Bachman's Sparrow. Additionally, south-central Florida is also the last stronghold of Florida Grasshopper Sparrow, a distinctive and locally endemic subspecies said to be the most endangered bird in the continental United States.

### Florida Scrub-Jay Trail

The Florida Scrub-Jay Trail is located in Clermont, Lake County's largest city, and is the trailhead for a state-wide, interconnected network of scrub-jay habitat, ranging from the Lake Wales Ridge to the south up to Ocala National Forest to the north, and from Sarasota in the west to Merritt Island and Cape Canaveral in the east.

### Emerald Marsh

The St Johns Water Management District reclaimed the agricultural fields of Emerald Marsh to improve the water quality of Lake Griffin. It is now one of the most heralded wildlife preserves in central Florida. The lakes and marshes are readily accessible via

Florida Scrub-jay is endemic to the 'Sunshine State', with only a limited range even there.

**HOT-SPOT** The Sunshine State may be a popular tourist destination, but it's also a premier birding location – and the action begins close to Orlando with the endemic Florida Scrub-jay and many other species in Lake County.



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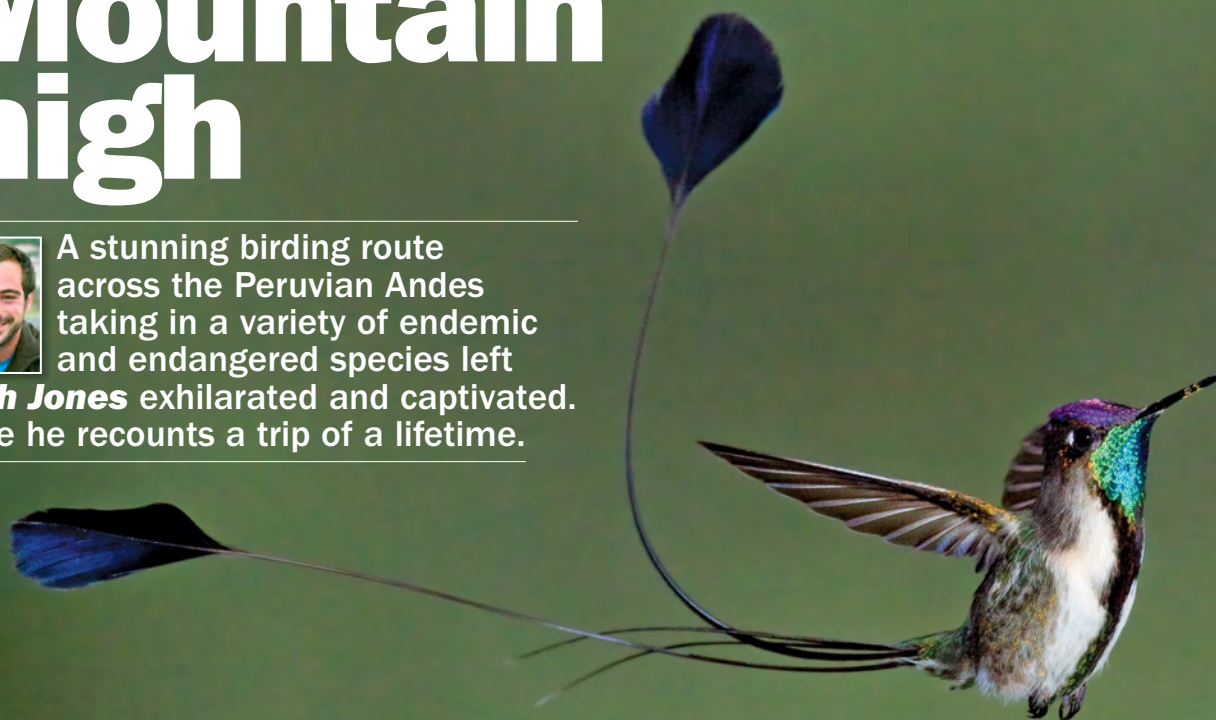
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# Mountain high



A stunning birding route across the Peruvian Andes taking in a variety of endemic and endangered species left **Josh Jones** exhilarated and captivated. Here he recounts a trip of a lifetime.



Male Marvellous Spatuletail is high on any visiting birder's wants list, and is one of the most striking of Peruvian endemics with its absurdly long tail plumes, which are also present in the plainer female.

DUBI SHAPIRO

It's late afternoon and a wavering mist clings stubbornly to the surrounding hills. The light is low and the valley silent save for the occasional insect or bird betraying its presence. There is an eeriness to the atmosphere, which is amplified as a few light raindrops begin to fall. The occasional hummingbird squeaks as it zips past: Sparkling Violetear, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, White-bellied Woodstar ...

But there is one particular hummer that draws birders to this small pocket of the northern Peruvian Andes. It is the reason we've ascended from the

oppressive heat of the Marañón valley floor to the altogether cooler transitional forests at Huembo, at an elevation of around 2,000 m. Almost solely restricted to the eastern slopes of the Río Utcubamba Valley, Marvellous Spatuletail is not only localised and rare, but also one of the most spectacular of all its family: males are instantly recognisable by their remarkably long outer tail feathers, which cross over and are tipped by the glossy 'spatules' that give the bird its name.

Fortunately it's not long before we witness this most desired of all Peruvian



INSET: JOSH JONES

endemics. Lightning fast, a male shoots across the clearing in front of us and hovers at a flower, the outrageous tail feathers bouncing around with a life of their own. Over the next half hour we're treated to several more exhilarating views of the species, including one briefly perched, its uncompromising energy a stark contrast to the dreary half-light that is gradually enveloping the valley.

## Route to endemics

Northern Peru is one of the least-known yet most endemic-rich areas of South America, and the spatuletail forms one of the cornerstones around which the Northern Peru Birding Route, as it has been named, is designed. The distance between the trail's eastern outpost in Tarapoto and Chiclayo on the Pacific Coast is around 250 miles as the condor flies. Yet the significant presence of



**Above:** Tumbes Tyrant is one of a number of range-restricted species to be found on the Northern Peru Birding Route.

**Left:** Elegant Crescentchest is found only in Peru and Ecuador, and is in its own family which is related to the tapaculos.

JOSH JONES



White-winged Guan is classified as Critically Endangered by BirdLife, as it has an extremely small and fragmented population, currently being bolstered by a captive breeding project.



JOSH JONES

the Andes between these two localities ensures that this relatively small area is blessed by an overwhelming array of habitats and micro-climates.

Such vast diversity naturally equates to an incredible bird list. A three-week tour along the main route and its subsidiaries can notch up more than 700 species; our own seven-day trip was undertaken at a fairly relaxed pace and yet we still scored more than 300. In addition to the dozens of endemics there is a whole host of range-restricted and endangered species which only serve to reinforce the potent appeal of this unique region.

'Endangered' and 'threatened' are words saddeningly prominent when

looking at the status of many of the route's most appealing birds. Like many other areas of South America, Peru has been subjected to widespread (even catastrophic) habitat destruction, notably deforestation, with this still continuing today.

The designation of nature reserves and national parks is vital in the preservation of many species, and there are a number of these along the route – some well-established, others embryonic. Eco-tourism plays a crucial part in their continued existence, and the increasing recognition of the Northern Peru Birding Route as one of the ultimate Neotropical birding experiences at least

bodes well for its future.

Our trip commenced in Chiclayo, to the west of the Andes. The Tumbesian region lies in the rain shadow of these mighty mountains and is naturally arid. Habitats include a blend of dry forest and semi-desert which support a number of Tumbesian endemics. In the acacia forests of Bosque de Pómac, listen out for a sound reminiscent a fisherman's reel losing line to a hooked fish – the source is the endangered Peruvian Plantcutter. A visual highlight is Rufous Flycatcher, unique among its genus for its orange-and-brown plumage.

Not far away, in the foothills of the



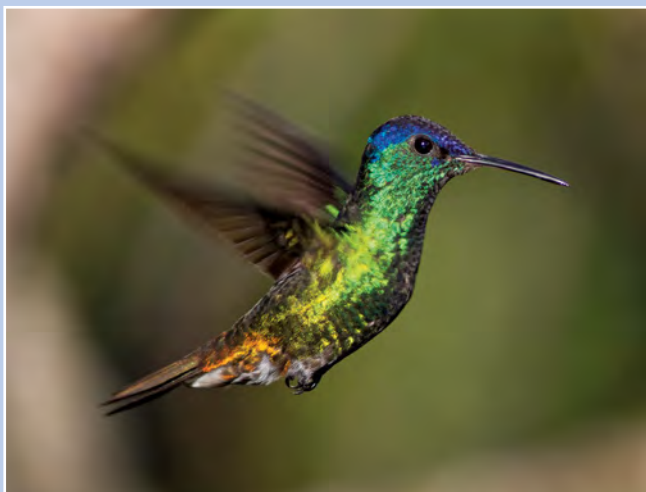
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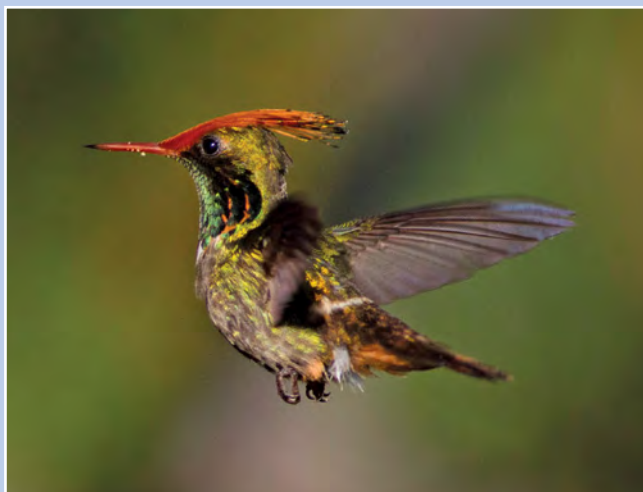
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**Left:** a key target for the birding cognoscenti, Lulu's Tody-Flycatcher exhibits beautiful but subdued colour combinations; the species is classified as Endangered due to habitat loss, which is predicted to continue into the foreseeable future. **Right:** Watkins's Antpitta is a dry forest specialist, classified as Near Threatened due its restricted range.





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**Golden-tailed Sapphire (above, left) and Rufous-crested Coquette (above, right) are two of dozens of hummingbirds which can be seen along the birding route. Both are widespread species in South America, but the latter is more able to adapt to degraded forest environments, while the former is restricted to lowland and mid-elevation montane forests.**

Andes, lies the Chaparri Reserve, the site of a reintroduction scheme for the critically endangered White-winged Guan (truly wild guans can also be seen in the surrounding forests). At ground level you are likely to find the stunning Elegant Crescentchest, which is surprisingly elusive despite its eye-catching appearance. Gaudy Vermilion Flycatchers, however, are both conspicuous and abundant, though it is a black-and-yellow flycatcher that is the real prize: Tumbes Tyrant, another near-endemic.

A trip to higher ground at nearby Casupe brings with it further dry forest species and, with luck, Andean Condor high over the hills. Back at the lodge, expect a visit from a friendly Sechuran Fox at dinner; its tameness rivalling even the boldest of London's urban counterparts.

### Western passage

Our next destination required a journey through the western Andes. This gives

a first taste of the spectacular scale of these supreme peaks and, as we climb, produces further new birds. A chance stop to photograph Black Vultures poking their way around a carcass produces Watkins's Antpitta in adjacent scrub, its comically large eye staring intently at us through the chaparral.

A little later, great excitement begins to unfold as a call of 'condor' comes from the front of the vehicle. Andean Condor isn't rare, but it's the iconic bird of the mountain chain we're crossing and a blockbuster species for most birding trips to western South America. Bustling out of the van, nerves are instantly settled: first one, then two, then a delectable dozen birds silently floating around the canyon on their 3-m wingspans. This truly is a species befitting of its gargantuan surroundings and a bird I'd wanted to see since I was very young.

After a number of welcome distractions en route we reached the city of Jaén, nestled at the base of the Marañón valley, just in time to

watch Lesser Nighthawks feeding acrobatically against an ever-reddening post-sunset sky. The Río Marañón forms the principal source of the Amazon and, over millions of years, has carved its path through the middle of the Andes. Left isolated by the huge peaks both to its east and west, the dry river valley forms a self-contained hotbed of endemism and lends its name to a thrush, a critically endangered spinetail and a crescentchest. This last species can be seen just a stone's throw from Jaén and is similar to the previously encountered Elegant, though the coverts are fringed white rather than chestnut and the underparts are a brighter orange.

Rising east into the Andes once more sees rapid changes in climate and ecosystem. Water is far more apparent as the cast of the Andean rain shadow ebbs away. Drizzle begins to fall and we notch up roadside Torrent Duck and Fasciated



**The cloud-shrouded mountain forest scenery is breathtaking enough, but it can reveal up to 700 or more species over a three-week visit.**

JOSH JONES





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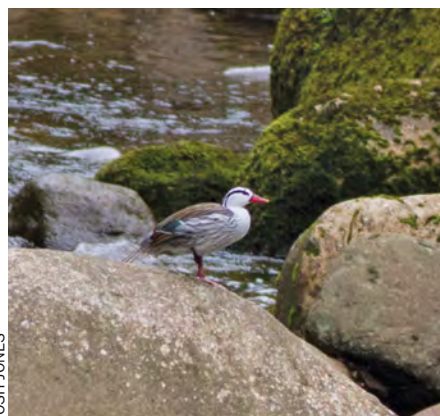
Like many of the other localised and endemic species, Marañón Crescentchest is threatened by habitat loss, but also exemplifies the ever-increasing diversity of South American birds as more and more cryptic forms are revealed to be 'good species' by DNA and vocalisation analysis.

Tiger Heron among the cascading rapids at the bottom of a steep-sided, winding canyon. We subsequently ascend to the realm of the spatuletail: a world unrecognisable from the parched floor of the Marañón valley just a couple of hours away.

## Phenomenal reserve

An hour further east lies the legendary Abra Patricia reserve, situated above 2,000 m. The humid cloudforest here is one of the most ecologically diverse habitats on the planet and, with more than 300 bird species recorded on the reserve, the birding is simply phenomenal.

Long-whiskered Owllet – one of the smallest, rarest and most range-restricted owls in the world – is top of the menu here, but other localised endemics such as Lulu's Tody-



JOSH JONES

Torrent Duck is a widespread breeder in rocky, fast-flowing Andean streams. The four previously named Peruvian subspecies are now sometimes regarded as colour morphs, as they appear to freely mix.

Flycatcher, Ochre-fronted Antpitta and Yellow-scarfed Tanager are also headline species. Birds aside, the reserve is home to the critically endangered Yellow-tailed Woolly Monkey, while the nightly showing of moths around the aptly named Owllet Lodge is a spectacle in itself. The lodge, nestled in a spectacular valley carpeted by virgin forest, is the essential base for anyone birding this area of northern Peru, and the surrounding reserve is worthy of at least two full days' exploration.

Descending slowly eastwards to the steamy, forested lowlands of Amazonia produces a plethora of species as both the climate and habitats change again. As is typical for the Neotropics, the composition varies with altitude and new birds were still coming thick and fast as our trip concluded in Tarapoto. There were many highlights there, but those that particularly stand out include a remarkably accessible Oilbird colony lurking under a busy road bridge and the feeders at Waqanki, which offer an almost overwhelming experience as literally hundreds of hummingbirds – including the stunning Rufous-crested Coquette – zoom about you. The bizarre sight and sound of lekking Andean Cock-of-the-rocks is encountered at several locations. Overhead King Vulture, Plumbeous Kite and Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle each cause great excitement, while the forest canopy is full of seemingly limitless tanagers, woodcreepers, antbirds and plenty more besides.

Northern Peru is one of the most incredibly bio-diverse parts of the world.

## PERU

### Visiting

- There are no direct flights from Britain to Peru. Several airlines fly from London Heathrow via one stop-over to Lima, from where you can take an internal flight to Chiclayo or Tarapoto. Try KLM ([www.klm.com](http://www.klm.com)), British Airways ([www.britishairways.com](http://www.britishairways.com)) or LAN ([www.lan.com](http://www.lan.com)).
- Green Tours, for organised birding tours: [www.greentours.com.pe](http://www.greentours.com.pe)
- Prom Peru, the official travel and tourism portal: [www.peru.travel](http://www.peru.travel)

### Further reading

- *Field Guide to the Birds of Peru* by Thomas S Schulenberg, Douglas F Stotz, Daniel F Lane, John P O'Neill and Theodore A Parker III (Christopher Helm, 2007, £29.99) – order from £27.99 on page 77.
- *Travellers Wildlife Guides: Peru* by David L Pearson and Les Beletsky (Interlink, 2015, £18.99).

### Online resources

- A comprehensive guide to Peru's wildlife: [www.peruwildlife.info](http://www.peruwildlife.info)
- A checklist of Peru's birds: [www.birdlist.org/peru.htm](http://www.birdlist.org/peru.htm)

Its avifauna is spectacularly varied and the birding here impresses even the most road-hardened world birders. With such a range of fantastic habitats accessible over a small area, it is no wonder that the Northern Peru Birding Route is rapidly becoming a must-visit destination for birders wanting to experience the Neotropics. My eight-day whistle-stop tour has left me desperate to return, and anyone else visiting this fabulous corner of South America will surely leave just as captivated. ■

## Acknowledgements

*Birdwatch* travelled to Peru courtesy of Prom Peru and Green Tours.





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AT101 c/w DH101 Head £179  
AT101 c/w DH101 Head £349

Carbon Fibre Tripods  
CT Travel c/w DH101 Head £489  
CT101 c/w DH101 Head £499

## 0% 12 MONTHS INTEREST FREE CREDIT

APR ON ALL SWAROVSKI SCOPES & BUNDLES THIS MONTH

### SWAROVSKI OPTIK ATX/STX

MODULAR TELESCOPES

A choice of 3 Objective Modules, 85 & 95mm & 2 eyepiece modules (angled / straight) for a total of 6 different options.

**OBJECTIVE MODULES** (REQUIRES EYEPIECE)  
RRP NOW 10% Dep. Monthly Payment  
65mm Objective Module £570 £603 £60.30 £45.22  
85mm Objective Module £1180 £1062 £106.20 £79.65  
95mm Objective Module £1460 £1314 £131.40 £98.55

**EYEPIECE MODULES**  
ATX Angled Eyepiece Module £1670 £1500 £150.00 £112.50  
STX Straight Eyepiece Module £1670 £1500 £150.00 £112.50

**CASES**  
2 Piece Stay on Case £192

**BUNDLE OPTIONS**  
Includes FREE Lowepro Scope Travel 200AW Backpack RRP £139

ATX/STX 25-60x65 £2340 £2103 £210.30 £157.72  
ATX/STX 25-60x85 £2850 £2562 £256.20 £192.15  
ATX/STX 30-70x95 £3130 £2814 £281.40 £211.05

**ATX/STX ACCESSORIES**  
TSL APO Apochromat Telephoto Lens System for ATX/STX £391  
DCB II Swing Adapter for ATX/STX £292  
SSR II Telescope Rail £120  
Swarovski Stay on Case for Objective Modules £105  
Swarovski Stay on Case for ATX/STX Eyepiece Modules £97  
SKUA Stay on Case for Objective Lens £49  
SKUA Stay on Case for Eyepiece £49

PA-15 Adapter For iPhone 5/5s £115

### SWAROVSKI OPTIK ATX/STX HD

HIGH DEFINITION

Giving you all the features that you would look for in a lightweight, reliable spotting scope, providing the perfect start for anyone taking an interest, for instance, in the world of birdwatching.

**ANGLED OR STRAIGHT**  
RRP 10% Monthly Deposit Payment  
ATX/STX HD 65mm £1180 £1059 £105.90 £79.83  
ATX/STX HD 80mm £1690 £1520 £152.00 £114.14

**BUNDLE OPTIONS - ANGLED OR STRAIGHT**  
Includes FREE Lowepro Scope Travel 200AW Backpack RRP £139

ATX/STX HD 65mm c/w 20-60x zoom £1724 £1434 £143.40 £107.50  
ATX/STX HD 80mm c/w 20-60x zoom £2224 £1889 £188.90 £144.60

**ATX/STX ACCESSORIES**  
TSL 800 Telephoto Lens for your SLR £435  
DCB II Swing Adapter £278  
SSR II Telescope Rail £120  
Stay on Case £155

**EYEPIECES**  
20-60x 5 Zoom Eyepiece £358  
25-50x W Zoom Eyepiece £440

### EDG SPOTTING SCOPES

Nikon

Nikon's EDG Fieldscopes deliver a spectacular field of view with crystal clear, edge to edge views and intense, fully saturated colours - superb.

**ANGLED OR STRAIGHT**  
RRP  
EDG 65mm Angled or Straight £1565.99 £1299  
EDG 85mm Angled or Straight £1981.99 £1599

**EDG VR ACCESSORIES**  
FSA-12 Fieldscope Digital SLR Attachment £499  
Fieldscope Eyepiece Mount Adapter EMA-1 £49.99  
Stay on Case £84.99  
Eyepieces From £279.99

**EDG VR 85 FIELDSCOPE**  
See website for details and specifications

### DIASCOPE SPOTTING SCOPES

ZEISS

Innovative high performance spotting scopes with dual focus system and wide panorama field of view, unmatched brilliant imaging and up to 75x zoom

**SAVE UP TO £596**

**24 & 36 Months Finance**

**BUNDLES**  
65 T\*FL Angled or Straight c/w 15-56x Eyepiece £2230 £1699 £170 £55.23  
85 T\*FL Angled c/w 20-75x Eyepiece £2695 £2099 £210 £68.24

**DIASCOPE ACCESSORIES** Zeiss Stay on Case RRP £150 NOW £125 • SKUA Stay on Case £79

### GITZO TRIPODS

RRP NOW  
GT1531 £529.99 £425.99  
GT1541 £709.99 £495.99  
GT2542LS £719.99 £589.99  
GH1720R 2 Way Head £234.99 £194.99  
GH2720R 2 Way Head £279.99 £249.99  
GS5370 MC QR Plate £41.95 £34.99

### Velbon BIRDING TRIPODS

Sherpa 200R RRP £110  
c/w PH157Q Head £110  
Sherpa 5370D RRP £169.99  
c/w PH157Q Head £169.99  
GEO E643D Carbon Fibre RRP £258  
c/w QHD 630 B&S Head £258

### SLIK D3 MASTER CLASSIC TRIPOD

Comes complete with 2 Way Pan Head (RRP £195) **OUR PRICE £139**

### Leica PREMIER AUTHORISED DEALER

## APO TELEVID SPOTTING SCOPES

Robustly engineered construction with a compact design. Offering a wide field of view with high colour fidelity, pin-sharp detail resolution & maximum contrast.

**FREE LOWEPRO SCOPE TRAVEL 200AW BACKPACK RRP £139 WITH EVERY LEICA BUNDLE**

APO Televid 82 Angled or Straight c/w 25-50x WW £3230 £2699  
APO Televid 65 Angled or Straight c/w 25-50x WW £2630 £2199  
Leica Stay on Case was £180 NOW ONLY £155 Photo Adapter RRP £520 NOW £469  
SKUA Stay on Case £79 Leica 1.8x Extender £299

### Nikon ED 50 FIELDSCOPES

Compact & lightweight with Stearns ED lens

ANGLED OR STRAIGHT c/w 13-40x MKII Eyepiece & Hand Hold Case RRP £810.99 £579

### Nikon PROSTAFF 5 FIELDSCOPES

Entry models of Nikon Fieldscopes and successors of the Spotting Scope RA III series. The main body is about 20% lighter than the current RA III spotting scopes.

ANGLED OR STRAIGHT RRP NOW  
60mm c/w 16-48x Zoom £399.98 £299  
62mm c/w 20-60x Zoom £499.98 £369

### BUNDLE PLUS FREE TSN 883/884

SPOTTING SCOPES ANGLED OR STRAIGHT

Redefining the standards of color brilliance.

TSN 883/884 c/w 25-60x RRP NOW  
SOC & Tripod Carrying System £2999 £2299

Kowa Eyepieces from £195  
Kowa Stay on Cases from £49

TSN 601/2 SPOTTING SCOPES ANGLED OR STRAIGHT  
Light weight ideal for beginners

TSN 601 - Body Only RRP NOW  
c/w 25-60x & SOC £523 £399  
TSN 601 - Body Only RRP NOW  
c/w 25-60x & SOC £523 £399

### acuter HELIOS NATURECLOSE FIELDMASTER

WATERPROOF SPOTTING SCOPES

Ideal for birdwatching, target spotting & general nature observations. Excellent optical performance with all models delivering crisp, high resolution images with excellent colour correction.

16-40x55 £129  
20-60x80 £169  
22-67x100 £239

15-45x60 ED Dual Speed £199  
24-72x70 ED Dual Speed £399  
20-60x80 ED Dual Speed £399  
20-60x80 Triplet Dual Speed £799

### HAWKE Endurance & Endurance ED

Endurance 16-48x68 A RRP £369 NOW £331.99  
Endurance 20-60x80 A RRP £419 NOW £376.99  
Endurance ED 16-48x68 A RRP £529 NOW £475.99  
Endurance ED 20-60x80 A RRP £629 NOW £565.99  
Eyepieces from £72.99

### HAWKE Nature & Nature Trek

Nature 20-60x60 A RRP £119.95 NOW £107.99  
Nature 24-72x70 A RRP £149.95 NOW £134.99  
Nature Trek 18-55x68 A RRP £199 NOW £178.99  
Nature Trek 20-60x80 A RRP £219 NOW £196.99  
Nature Trek 22-67x100 A RRP £329 NOW £295.99

### HAWKE Frontier ED Spotting Scopes

Complete with a stay-on soft canvas scope cover

Frontier ED 20-60x85 Angled RRP £699 NOW £629.99

### HAWKE Panorama ED Spotting Scopes

Complete with a sculpted stay-on protective cover

Panorama ED 20-60x85 Angled RRP £799 NOW £769.99



# 24 & 36 MONTHS FINANCE

Now available on all orders over £500



We are pleased to offer 24 & 36 Months Finance on all orders over £500. Apply and sign online to get an instant decision in just a few minutes with no paperwork whatsoever. See website for details.

INSTANT DECISION

NO PAPERWORK



opticon DBA OASIS

SAVE £100  
DBA Oasis 8x42 RRP £629 NOW £499  
DBA Oasis 10x42 RRP £629 NOW £499

opticon T3 TRAILFINDER

SAVE £50  
T3 Trailfinder WP 8x32 £129 RRP NOW £79

NEW...NEW...NEW

**VICTORY SF** Binoculars  
Faster, brighter, more ergonomic, with an unparalleled wide-angle field of view.  
Victory SF 8x42 £1949  
Victory SF 10x42 £1979  
See website for full details

**Nikon TRAVELITE EX**

|       |             |                |
|-------|-------------|----------------|
| 8x25  | RRP £135.99 | <b>NOW £79</b> |
| 9x25  | RRP £145.99 | <b>NOW £85</b> |
| 10x25 | RRP £155.99 | <b>NOW £89</b> |
| 12x25 | RRP £165.99 | <b>NOW £95</b> |

**Nikon PROSTAFF S**

|       |             |                    |
|-------|-------------|--------------------|
| 8x42  | RRP £219.99 | <b>NOW £189.99</b> |
| 10x42 | RRP £239.99 | <b>NOW £209.99</b> |
| 10x50 | RRP £249.99 | <b>NOW £219.99</b> |
| 12x50 | RRP £269.99 | <b>NOW £239.99</b> |

**0% 12 MONTHS INTEREST FREE CREDIT**  
APR ON ALL SWAROVSKI BINOCULARS BUNDLES THIS MONTH

**SWAROVSKI OPTIK EL SWAROVISION**  
IN A CLASS OF ITS OWN

State-of-the-art optics with SWAROVISION technology, offering the benefits of comfortable use, elegant design, an ergonomic wrap-around grip and ultimate functionality.

**FREE Swarovski Cleaning Kit worth £30\***

|                      |           |                  |
|----------------------|-----------|------------------|
| 8x32 Swarovision EL  | RRP £1600 | <b>NOW £1440</b> |
| 10x32 Swarovision EL | RRP £1630 | <b>NOW £1467</b> |
| 10x42 Swarovision EL | RRP £1960 | <b>NOW £1764</b> |
| 10x50 Swarovision EL | RRP £2110 | <b>NOW £1899</b> |
| 12x50 Swarovision EL | RRP £2130 | <b>NOW £1917</b> |

**12 MONTHS INTEREST FREE CREDIT**

| 10% Deposit | Monthly Payment |
|-------------|-----------------|
| £144        | £108            |
| £1467       | £110.02         |
| £1764       | £132.30         |
| £1899       | £133.65         |
| £1917       | £142.41         |

**FREE Swarovski Cleaning Set worth £30 with Swarovski Binoculars**

**SWAROVSKI OPTIK EL TRAVELER**  
EXPERIENCE THE MOMENT  
Crystal-clear optics with a large field of view.

|       |           |                  |
|-------|-----------|------------------|
| 8x32  | RRP £1600 | <b>NOW £1440</b> |
| 10x32 | RRP £1630 | <b>NOW £1467</b> |

**CL COMPANION**  
ADVANTAGE YOUR SIDE  
The number one compact, lightweight binocular.

|       |          |                 |
|-------|----------|-----------------|
| 8x30  | RRP £830 | <b>NOW £747</b> |
| 8x25  | RRP £550 | <b>NOW £495</b> |
| 10x30 | RRP £850 | <b>NOW £765</b> |
| 10x25 | RRP £590 | <b>NOW £530</b> |

**CL POCKET COMPACTS**  
PUTS THE WORLD IN YOUR POCKET  
Outstanding optical clarity.

|             |           |                  |
|-------------|-----------|------------------|
| 8x25        | RRP £1695 | <b>NOW £1429</b> |
| 10x25       | RRP £1725 | <b>NOW £1449</b> |
| 10x42       | RRP £1910 | <b>NOW £1629</b> |
| 10x54 - NEW | RRP £1950 | <b>NOW £1699</b> |

**ZEISS Compact Binoculars**

**Conquest Compact**  
Compact pocket binoculars for entry level.

|          |          |                 |
|----------|----------|-----------------|
| 8x20 T*  | RRP £355 | <b>NOW £299</b> |
| 10x25 T* | RRP £410 | <b>NOW £339</b> |

**Victory Compact**  
High performance optics for maximum performance in pocket format.

|          |          |                 |
|----------|----------|-----------------|
| 8x20 T*  | RRP £355 | <b>NOW £299</b> |
| 10x25 T* | RRP £410 | <b>NOW £339</b> |

**ZEISS NEW Conquest HD** Binoculars

Modern observation optics - the clear and neutral colour reproduction sets new standards in its class.

|          |           |                  |
|----------|-----------|------------------|
| 8x32 HD  | RRP £685  | <b>NOW £557</b>  |
| 10x32 HD | RRP £725  | <b>NOW £599</b>  |
| 10x42 HD | RRP £795  | <b>NOW £679</b>  |
| 10x56 HD | RRP £835  | <b>NOW £695</b>  |
| 15x56 HD | RRP £1160 | <b>NOW £1099</b> |
| 15x56 HD | RRP £1195 | <b>NOW £1129</b> |
| 15x56 HD | RRP £1265 | <b>NOW £1199</b> |

**SAVE UP TO £66**

**Nikon MONARCH 5 & 7**

|                 |             |                    |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Monarch 5 8x42  | RRP £399.99 | <b>NOW £349.99</b> |
| Monarch 5 10x42 | RRP £429.99 | <b>NOW £369.99</b> |
| Monarch 5 12x42 | RRP £449.99 | <b>NOW £389.99</b> |
| Monarch 5 8x56  | RRP £719.99 | <b>NOW £649.99</b> |
| Monarch 5 10x56 | RRP £789.99 | <b>NOW £709.99</b> |
| Monarch 5 12x56 | RRP £819.99 | <b>NOW £749.99</b> |
| Monarch 7 8x42  | RRP £389.99 | <b>NOW £339.99</b> |
| Monarch 7 10x42 | RRP £419.99 | <b>NOW £369.99</b> |
| Monarch 7 12x42 | RRP £449.99 | <b>NOW £399.99</b> |

**Nikon High Grade Light**

**SAVE UP TO £710**

|       |              |                    |
|-------|--------------|--------------------|
| 8x32  | RRP £991.99  | <b>NOW £579.99</b> |
| 10x32 | RRP £1043.99 | <b>NOW £599.99</b> |
| 8x42  | RRP £1355.99 | <b>NOW £699.99</b> |
| 10x42 | RRP £1459.99 | <b>NOW £749.99</b> |

**Nikon SUPERIOR OPTICS**

**EDGE**

For the birdier looking for superior optical performance in a lightweight package - **SUPERIOR**

|       |              |                  |
|-------|--------------|------------------|
| 8x32  | RRP £1400.99 | <b>NOW £1249</b> |
| 10x32 | RRP £1582.99 | <b>NOW £1359</b> |
| 7x42  | RRP £1531.99 | <b>NOW £1299</b> |
| 8x42  | RRP £1633.99 | <b>NOW £1399</b> |
| 10x42 | RRP £1735.99 | <b>NOW £1489</b> |

**12 MONTH INTEREST FREE CREDIT**

| 10% Deposit | Monthly Payment |
|-------------|-----------------|
| £1249       | £93.42          |
| £1359       | £101.92         |
| £1299       | £97.42          |
| £1399       | £104.92         |
| £1489       | £112.42         |

**Canon Image Stabilising Binoculars**

|        |              |                     |
|--------|--------------|---------------------|
| 8x25   | RRP £384.99  | <b>NOW £349.99</b>  |
| 10x30  | RRP £409.99  | <b>NOW £369.99</b>  |
| 12x36  | RRP £669.99  | <b>NOW £549.99</b>  |
| 10x42L | RRP £1349.99 | <b>NOW £1169.99</b> |
| 15x50  | RRP £1329.99 | <b>NOW £849.99</b>  |
| 18x50  | RRP £1599.99 | <b>NOW £999.99</b>  |

**Leica ULTRAVID HD & HD PLUS**  
EXCELLENCE IN BRIGHTNESS & MECHANICAL PERFORMANCE  
Experience nature in razor-sharp details. Constructed to be a reliable companion

**TRINOVID**  
RUGGED & RELIABLE  
Vivid and colorful images.

|                      |           |                  |
|----------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Ultrad HD 8x32       | RRP £1660 | <b>NOW £1419</b> |
| Ultrad HD 10x32      | RRP £1700 | <b>NOW £1499</b> |
| Ultrad HD 8x42 Plus  | RRP £1650 | <b>NOW £1479</b> |
| Ultrad HD 10x42 Plus | RRP £1700 | <b>NOW £1529</b> |

See website for the complete range

**DUOVID**  
BRILLIANT & FLEXIBLE  
Allows observers to adapt swiftly to any situation. Offering a choice of two magnification factors.

|          |           |                  |
|----------|-----------|------------------|
| 8-12x42  | RRP £2130 | <b>NOW £1799</b> |
| 10-15x50 | RRP £2300 | <b>NOW £1949</b> |

**TRINOVID BCA COMPACTS**  
High-quality optics provide great resolving power in small size, making them the perfect companion for various occasions.

|       |          |                 |
|-------|----------|-----------------|
| 8x20  | RRP £390 | <b>NOW £329</b> |
| 10x25 | RRP £420 | <b>NOW £349</b> |

**opticon Imagic BGA SE RP**  
Roof Prism Binoculars

**SAVE £190**

|       |          |                 |
|-------|----------|-----------------|
| 8x32  | RRP £429 | <b>NOW £239</b> |
| 10x42 | RRP £469 | <b>NOW £279</b> |

**ZEISS NEW Terra** Binoculars

Features an attractive, modern design and with a weight of only 500g is not only extremely light, but thanks to its slim form also exceptionally compact and robust.

|       |          |                 |
|-------|----------|-----------------|
| 8x42  | RRP £360 | <b>NOW £299</b> |
| 10x42 | RRP £405 | <b>NOW £339</b> |

**HAWKE Premier Open Hinge Compacts**

|                |            |                   |
|----------------|------------|-------------------|
| Green or Black | RRP £49.95 | <b>NOW £44.99</b> |
| 8x25           | RRP £49.95 | <b>NOW £44.99</b> |
| 10x25          | RRP £54.95 | <b>NOW £49.99</b> |
| 12x25          | RRP £59.95 | <b>NOW £54.99</b> |

**HAWKE Premier Lightweight, Roof Prism Binoculars**

|               |            |                   |
|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| 8x42 - Black  | RRP £64.95 | <b>NOW £59.99</b> |
| 8x42 - Green  | RRP £64.95 | <b>NOW £59.99</b> |
| 8x42 - Camo   | RRP £64.95 | <b>NOW £59.99</b> |
| 10x42 - Black | RRP £69.95 | <b>NOW £64.99</b> |
| 10x42 - Green | RRP £69.95 | <b>NOW £64.99</b> |
| 10x42 - Camo  | RRP £69.95 | <b>NOW £64.99</b> |

**HAWKE NatureTrek Series**

|       |             |                    |
|-------|-------------|--------------------|
| 8x32  | RRP £99.95  | <b>NOW £89.99</b>  |
| 10x32 | RRP £109.95 | <b>NOW £99.99</b>  |
| 8x42  | RRP £119.95 | <b>NOW £104.99</b> |
| 10x42 | RRP £129.95 | <b>NOW £109.99</b> |
| 10x50 | RRP £134.95 | <b>NOW £116.99</b> |
| 12x50 | RRP £139.95 | <b>NOW £121.99</b> |

**HAWKE Frontier ED Open Hinge Binoculars**

|                |             |                    |
|----------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Green or Black | RRP £219.95 | <b>NOW £199.99</b> |
| 8x32           | RRP £219.95 | <b>NOW £199.99</b> |
| 10x32          | RRP £229.95 | <b>NOW £209.99</b> |

**opticon Traveller BGA Mg Black**  
Pocket Binoculars

**NEW MODEL**

|                    |          |                 |
|--------------------|----------|-----------------|
| 6x32 BGA MG Black  | RRP £229 | <b>NOW £219</b> |
| 8x32 BGA MG Black  | RRP £239 | <b>NOW £229</b> |
| 10x32 BGA MG Black | RRP £249 | <b>NOW £239</b> |

**opticon Explorer WA Oasis-C**  
Wide Angle Binoculars

**NEW MODEL**

|       |          |                 |
|-------|----------|-----------------|
| 8x42  | RRP £199 | <b>NOW £189</b> |
| 10x42 | RRP £209 | <b>NOW £199</b> |

See website for latest images

**opticon ED-X**  
Smaller, Lighter, Sharper

**SAVE £140**

|      |          |                 |
|------|----------|-----------------|
| 8x42 | RRP £319 | <b>NOW £179</b> |
|------|----------|-----------------|

**Bushnell H2O Compacts**  
Folding Roof Prism Binoculars

O-ring sealed and nitrogen purged to ensure stunning views no matter how wet they get.

|       |            |                |
|-------|------------|----------------|
| 8x25  | RRP £89.95 | <b>NOW £49</b> |
| 10x25 | RRP £94.95 | <b>NOW £55</b> |
| 12x25 | RRP £99.95 | <b>NOW £59</b> |

**Bushnell H2O Full Size**  
Roof Prism Binoculars

The Bushnell H2O Full Size Binoculars pack powerful, bright optics into a 100% waterproof package.

|       |          |                 |
|-------|----------|-----------------|
| 8x42  | RRP £150 | <b>NOW £115</b> |
| 10x42 | RRP £170 | <b>NOW £125</b> |

**Bushnell NatureView**  
Roof Prism Binoculars

An outstanding long-range binocular. Ideal for long-distance birding or wildlife observation. Specially adapted to capture natural wonders.

|               |          |                 |
|---------------|----------|-----------------|
| 8x32 - Green  | RRP £140 | <b>NOW £99</b>  |
| 8x42 - Green  | RRP £195 | <b>NOW £139</b> |
| 10x42 - Green | RRP £210 | <b>NOW £149</b> |

**Bushnell Elite HD ED**  
Roof Prism Binoculars

Bright, Clear, HD Imagery  
100% waterproof and fogproof with a tough, lightweight magnesium body

**UNDER 1/2 PRICE**

|             |          |                 |
|-------------|----------|-----------------|
| HD 8x42 ED  | RRP £749 | <b>NOW £369</b> |
| HD 10x42 ED | RRP £799 | <b>NOW £399</b> |

**Bushnell Trophy Cam HD AP Xtra Camo**  
Trail Cameras

Now supporting stunning 1080p full HD video capture, an increased 60ft range and a hybrid capture mode allowing you to capture full resolution images and video simultaneously on every trigger.

119547 - RRP £250 **NOW £159**

**Bushnell NatureView Cam HD**  
Features GPS Geotagging

Breathtaking 1080p HD video make this the best choice for the most stunning views.

119438 - RRP £225 **NOW £149**

**Bushnell Trophy Cam HD Black LED**  
With B/W Text LCD

8MP high-quality full color resolution. HD Video - 1280x720 pixels. Day/night auto sensor. External power compatible. Programmable trigger.

119676 - RRP £260 **NOW £169**

**HIDE CLAMPS & MOUNTS**

|                          |             |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Opticon Car Window Mount | £46         |
| Opticon BC-2 Hide Mount  | £79         |
| Opticon Universal Mount  | £55         |
| Velbon Hide Clamp        | £45.99      |
| Leupold Window Mounts    | £84.99      |
| Manfrotto Column Clamps  | from £74.99 |

**SCOPE ACCESSORIES**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| T2 Adapter - connects the TIS-APO dioptre adapter to the T2 mount | £21.99 |
| DCB-5 Digital Camera Base Inc. Balance Rail                       | £275   |
| DCB II Swing Adapter  | £278   |
| TIS 800 Telephoto Lens Adapter                                    | £435   |

**SCOPE ACCESSORIES**

|                          |        |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Cleaning Kit             | £30    |
| Universal Tripod Adapter | £69.99 |
| Tree Fixing Screw        | £45    |
| SSR II Scope Rail        | £120   |

**WILDLIFE WATCHING SUPPLIES**

**STANDARD DOME HIDE**  
Lightweight, compact, quick to put up  
£239

**LARGE DOME HIDE**  
Lightweight, compact, quick to put up  
£279

**lowepro OPTICS SERIES**

Scope Photo Travel 350 AW - Backpack  
RRP £189 **NOW £99**

**lowepro OPTICS SERIES**

Scope Travel 200 AW - Backpack  
RRP £139 **NOW £69**

**Nikon Canon**

WE SELL NIKON & CANON DIGITAL SLR'S & LENSES - See website -

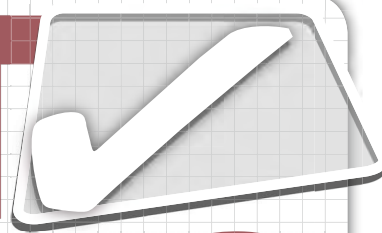
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# EXPERT REVIEWS



Your trusted guide to what's new in birding: [bit.ly/birdwatchreviews](http://bit.ly/birdwatchreviews)



## Ultimate ergonomics?

Has Swarovski reached the pinnacle of contemporary binocular design? **Mike Alibone** field tests improvements and accessories for the updated EL range.

### REVIEW

#### Updated Swarovski EL binoculars and accessories

**UNTIL** very recently, the ultimate goal for all producers of optical equipment was the delivery of the highest-quality image, set within cost constraints relating to research, development, materials and production processes, as well as the positioning of the product within the market. Attention to physical design often came a close second in many instances and, in some, would appear to have been given only minor consideration.

When it's widely acknowledged that your product has likely peaked in optical performance, though, the road to further improvement narrows somewhat, inviting – if not compelling – a revisit to ergonomic design. Announcing a suite of new developments, Swarovski has done exactly this with its updated EL binocular range, including accessories, due to be launched in September.

In order to evaluate these improvements, I joined a testing team in Norway in June. The considerable variation in habitat provided the ideal setting for testing the new ELs, which included all models within the range.

As well as visible changes to the chassis, the body armour has been improved, although its outward appearance remains

the same. The challenge for Swarovski was to find a covering that contained no plasticisers or softening agents. These are prone to leaking out – sometimes causing irritation – and materials containing them tend to absorb fats such as hand creams and other natural oils; this results in material degradation and loss of elasticity when exposed to heat and sunlight.

The new covering is made from a polymer which is hypoallergenic and contains no softening agents. It is up to four times more resistant to wear and abrasion, enabling it to hold its form and remain in a practically unaltered state many times longer than the material currently used.

To me, this covering presented well, felt soft and provided a more than adequate degree of grip, particularly while holding the heavier 50 mm models.

A further new feature comes in the form of a mechanical improvement. A secondary lock has been added to the dioptre adjustment on the central focusing wheel. It's a neat system that prevents the accidental pulling out of the wheel after the single eye adjustment has been made and the wheel pushed in. It is operated by depressing the centre of the wheel and turning it through approximately 90

degrees to lock it in place. The focusing wheel cannot be pulled out again to change the setting until the above operation is reversed. I found it very quick and simple to operate – and it works.

A considerable amount of thought has been invested in the redesign of neckstraps for the whole range, along with their method of attachment. Aside from the initial threading through





## 72 August's photo challenge

Northern Gannet makes an excellent photographic subject – see if you can capture a shot of one plunging into the sea.

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Mark Cocker's month-by-month account of his experiences with nature are a lyrical triumph.

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Merlin is given the full monograph treatment in this new title.

## 75 The Baltic and beyond

North-east Germany's best birding sites and species covered in this new guide.

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This detailed site guide covers the natural history of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura.

## 76 Introducing Peru's wildlife

Aimed at the ecotourist, this new guide provides information on the country's most commonly encountered wildlife.

### THIS MONTH'S EXPERT PANEL



**MIKE ALIBONE** is *Birdwatch*'s Optics Editor. He has been testing binoculars and telescopes for more than a decade.



**DAVID CALLAHAN** Prior to joining *Birdwatch*, David trained as a taxonomist at the Natural History Museum.



**STEVE YOUNG** is Photographic Consultant for *Birdwatch* and an award-winning wildlife photographer.



**ROB HUME** began watching birds as a child. He worked for the RSPB for many years and has written several books.



**DAVID CAMPBELL** is the newest addition to the BirdGuides team; he has been birding for more than 12 years.



**JOSH JONES** is well known as BirdGuides' News Team Manager. He has been obsessed by all things birdy since he was a toddler.

strap lugs, followed by fiddling with small buckles to adjust the length, the most common source of annoyance associated with conventional flat straps is their uncanny ability to become twisted, irrespective of the number of times you untwist them.

Acknowledging this, the new design sees rounded 'bootlace' proximal attachment sections which feed into a smooth, durable plastic ring with a hollow centre. A push-through circular pin connects the ring to a raised circular port on the chassis by applying a little thumb pressure, followed by a turn through approximately 90 degrees to lock each end of the strap in place. This leaves the connecting ring free to rotate through 360 degrees which, combined with the rounded strap, ensures that twisting is virtually eliminated.

The rounded 'bootlace' also allows any attached rainguard to rotate freely around it, again eliminating another source of twisting. Removal of the strap is achieved by applying greater pressure than that required for engaging and turning the pin in the opposite direction. It's easy to do, but does take a little practice in applying the requisite amounts of pressure.

To adjust the fitted strap length there is a circular locking device built into each end of the neoprene part of the strap which, when turned, loosens the bootlace so that its length can be adjusted. The larger, neoprene element of the strap is almost identical in shape to the current version, with a smoother piping and a more elasticated feel, designed to further dampen the weight around the neck.

I found the new strap comfortable and highly effective

in achieving its aims, whether it was attached to the lightweight 8x32 mm ELs (see *Birdwatch* 241: 59 for a full review) – while enjoying crystal clear images of Siberian Jays deep in the taiga forest – or to the larger 12x50 mm model (see *Birdwatch* 228: 41 for a full review), providing amazing views across landscapes of open tundra.

Another redesign is in the 'floating shoulder strap' which, although designed for buoyancy, is reshaped for comfort and includes the same 'pin and ring' connectivity found on the new neckstrap. It comprises layers of high-quality neoprene, with the amount of this material determined so that all of Swarovski's regular binoculars will float if dropped accidentally in water.

To demonstrate its effectiveness, one was thrown into Vadsø harbour, where it floated, successfully suspending the attached 8.5x42 ELs just below the sea's surface. The bright orange colour increases visibility and enables you to more readily pinpoint a floating binocular and, although prominent, it is unlikely to have any adverse impact on observer conspicuousness in the environments in which it is designed to be used.

Users of harnesses have not been overlooked in this redesign package. Developed a couple of years ago, the manufacturer's 'bino suspender' now has optional quick-release attachment rings so that it can be used with the newly designed EL body.

Which brings us back to the final and arguably most elegant design feature: the tethered objective covers. Flexible enough to hang vertically, even when the



The new comfort carrying strap pro (top) and floating shoulder strap (above) mark improvements in the range of accessories for the EL binoculars.

viewing angle is upward, they clip neatly into the rim of the objective housing, integrating to such an extent that they lose the appearance of an accessory. Their flexibility safeguards against blowing or springing back over the objectives to impair vision and their method of attachment ensures they do not fall off, although they are designed to unclip from the binoculars with a force of about 3-4 kg. Small plugs are supplied to cover the attachment ports if the lens caps

are not fitted.

These new objective lens covers will be supplied with all EL models, as will the new neckstrap which, along with the other accessories, can also be purchased separately. ■

### Further info

- Comfort carrying strap pro: £51
- Floating shoulder strap pro: £54
- Bino suspender pro: £41
- See [uk.swarovskioptik.com/nature](http://uk.swarovskioptik.com/nature) for details on all EL models



## STEVE YOUNG'S PHOTO CHALLENGE

# Northern Gannet



**JUDGING** by the number of entries for the last couple of challenges, everyone loves the seabird theme that I've been setting. As I don't want to upset anybody, I'll stick with that theme for a while longer – but the challenges will get harder when I'm in a less generous mood!

If you have visited Bempton Cliffs RSPB in East Yorkshire this spring or summer then this challenge is for you, as I'm looking for some great images of Northern Gannet. Away from this rare mainland breeding site this species is difficult to photograph, but a week on Shetland, a visit to Bass Rock or a few other sites should have seen you filling up the memory cards at a rapid rate.

Although Northern Gannets can be tame and fly past at very close range, there are a few difficulties when photographing them. A dark sea background can lead to the auto-exposure being fooled, meaning the largely white bird will be too light and the plumage will be over-exposed. Try switching to manual exposure and under-exposing by a full stop; for example, if auto says 1/500th sec, shoot at 1/1,000th sec.

For flight or diving shots use the fastest shutter speed the weather will allow. If shooting birds at the nesting ledge, when you might want to have more birds or more of the background in focus, try shooting at f11 instead.

If, like me, you are still planning to visit a seabird colony this year, don't forget to take all your memory cards with you as they tend to be filled very quickly. I look forward to seeing your best images!

Email your favourites to [editorial@birdwatch.co.uk](mailto:editorial@birdwatch.co.uk). The winning entry will receive a copy of *RSPB Seabirds* by Marianne Taylor.

• Turn to page 92 to find out who won June's challenge.



**Top:** on a windy day Northern Gannets will just hang in the wind, totally at ease in the conditions, unlike photographers who will be struggling to find a sheltered spot and hold the lens steady!

**Bottom:** if the weather turns nasty, try to find a bit of shelter behind a rock and keep on shooting; the birds will just carry on and you can take some atmospheric images like this one from Shetland.



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# A deeper look at the world



**MARK** Cocker regularly turns wildlife observation into literary achievements, which are not merely books about birds. This title looks at a small Norfolk parish and Mark's encounters

with wildlife throughout the year, but also his whole relationship with the landscapes, light and weather of this small part of East Anglia.

The book contains 140 of Mark's short pieces from 12 years of natural history writing, taken from newspapers, magazines, books and anthologies (especially the *Guardian*, *Eastern Daily Press* and *Birdwatch*). But Mark regards this as more than a simple collection. He has arranged everything into a monthly chronology, so there is inevitably a little repetition of ideas and phrases, but together they present more or less a diary of Claxton and its surroundings over a year.

Much of the subject matter comes from a walk to the River Yare, but anywhere will do. The

author can find a bird – or a beetle, plant, butterfly, or even an effect of the weather – to spark feelings about the place where he lives. Ordinary stuff, in a way, but not quite what all of us might find in our local parish, and certainly not observed with an ordinary eye.

Mark Cocker gets deep inside the world around him, what makes it tick and what makes him tick. It is a pleasure to be able to understand his thoughts and inspirations, while he hopes that the book will encourage others to do the same: to look

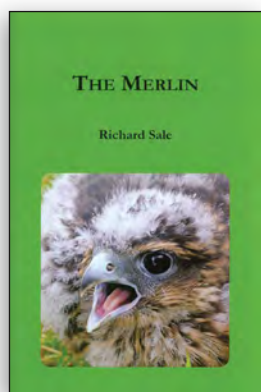
with a rather different eye at their own local surroundings. I think all of us can, in our own way, even though very few might be able to write it down in such an erudite fashion. For most of us, we know that mysterious things are at work in our complex relationship with the natural world, but pinning down exactly what goes on is beyond our reach.

Reading this book is a great enjoyment in itself, but also helps elucidate why the world outside is so very important to our inner selves. **Rob Hume**

## More info

- *Claxton: Field Notes from a Small Planet* by Mark Cocker (Jonathan Cape, London, 2014).
- 256 pages, some black-and-white line drawings.
- ISBN 9780224099653. Hbk, £14.99.

# The magic of Merlin



**IT** only takes a glance at the front cover to realise that *The Merlin* is not part of an established monograph series, but here is one of those occasional lessons in the importance of not judging a book by its cover. The almost antiquated appearance of the dustjacket shouldn't matter, but it is a shame that some potential readers may assume the content might be similarly dated, as this is far from the case.

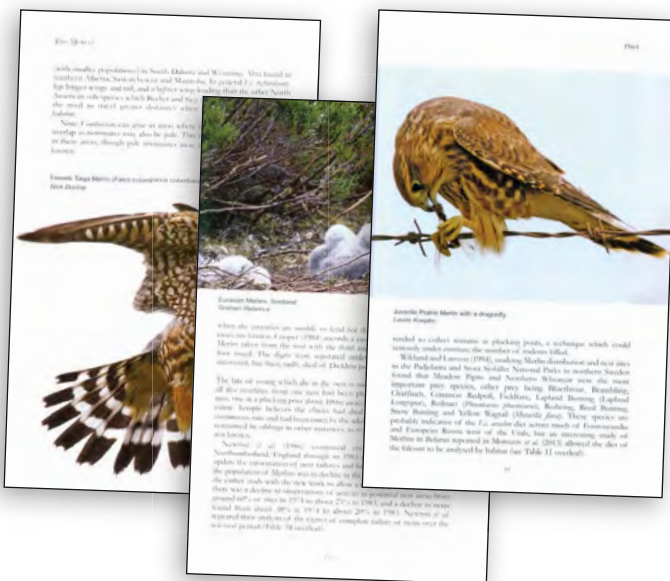
Clearly a work born of profound knowledge and love of the species, Richard Sale has done a commendable job of plugging a gaping hole in the literature with his self-published examination of this truly enigmatic falcon, a favourite among birders and falconers alike.

Gathering a wide variety of information and studies from various points across the species' range, the trap of

focusing too heavily on just one or two of the most familiar forms is avoided as well as is possible. Indeed, it is fascinating to learn just how different the species can be in character, appearance and ecology across its range, and no doubt many readers will find the well-covered urban Merlins of Saskatoon, Canada, especially intriguing.

Following an outline of how Merlin sits among the falcons in general, the nine forms are introduced, before the species is detailed in terms of its diet (who'd have thought prey as large as Barrow's Goldeneye could be tackled?), hunting methods, consumption and energy, breeding behaviour, movements, survival and population, as well as a look at significant relationships it shares with other species. Some sections make for truly absorbing reading – after all Merlin is an exciting topic – and the text is written ably. There are, however, points which may become a touch heavy for the general reader, as statistics and scientific language halt the flow of the prose.

All birders, particularly those with a penchant for birds of prey, will delight in the generous scattering of mostly high-quality, good-sized colour images of various subspecies of Merlin (potentially acting as a handy reference for vagrant hunters), with a few depicting prey items and habitats used by the



species. Rather clunky-looking boxes are sandwiched within the text, providing extra nuggets of interest which complement the main content and aid its understanding. The plentiful and varied figures are generally well presented and clear, visualising an array of data such as on flight paths, migration, time budgets and egg contamination levels, to name a few.

In *The Merlin*, Sale strikes a

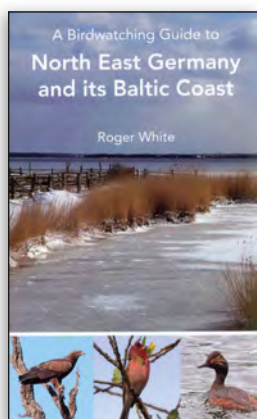
skilful balance between conveying the wonder and character of the subject with truly valuable and rigorous scientific material. There are a few imperfections to be found, but they're pretty marginal and are very comfortably covered by the slack that must be cut for such an exhaustive self-published work. If you have any interest in the lives of raptors, this is an essential addition to your collection. **David Campbell**

## More info

- *The Merlin* by Richard Sale (Snowfinch Publishing, Cheltenham, 2015).
- 304 pages, more than 70 colour and black-and-white photos, 37 colour and black-and-white illustrations, colour maps, 26 tables.
- ISBN 9780957173217. Hbk, £39.99.



# Baltic and beyond



**WHILE** Germany isn't particularly high on many birders' dream destinations list, it is possible to see many of the central European specialities in the country with a little effort, as well as far greater numbers of species that are scarce or rare in Britain.

North-eastern Germany has its fair share of decent nature reserves, as well as some good watchpoints over the Baltic, though migration is never as dramatic as can be seen from the former eastern bloc countries

further north. However, there are some very large Common Crane roosts in the region and good numbers of wintering wildfowl, as well as desirable breeding species such as Lesser Spotted Eagle, Spotted Crake, Whiskered Tern, Black and Middle Spotted Woodpeckers, Bluethroat, River and Greenish Warblers, Thrush Nightingale, Red-breasted Flycatcher and Oortolan Bunting in appropriate habitats.

This guide provides simple and well-illustrated routes and advice on how to see the more interesting species. The introduction is succinct, with rough outlines of habitats and birds to be seen, how to travel, where to stay and definitions of a few German words that may be encountered on the road. Much of this information is better detailed online these days, but the regional and location information is not, at least not in English.

The region covered extends down to the border of Brandenburg province (an area already covered by the author in a previous book; see *Birdwatch*



257: 53), and is divided into four rectangular zones, partly conforming to dominant habitat. This works very well, and enables the reader to plan routes or to assess which species might be seen over multiple adjacent sites.

The maps are simple and easy to understand, and there

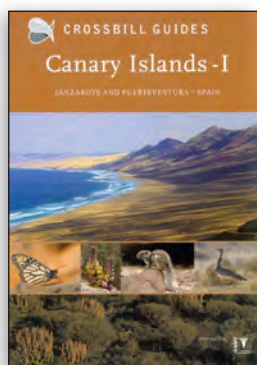
are many colour photographs of most of the sites. There is also a handy checklist at the end, and some recommended short breaks, which is a more realistic way of 'doing' the area for a birder, as the key species are mostly within reach of each other.

**David Callahan**

## More info

- *A Birdwatching Guide to North-East Germany and its Baltic Coast* by Roger White (self-published, Bristol, 2015).
- 147 pages, 70 colour photographs, 66 maps.
- ISBN 9780957169517. Pbk, £16.95.

# Encountering Canaries' wildlife



**THIS** book is an excellent companion for any naturalist considering an exploration of either Lanzarote or Fuerteventura. However, it must be made clear that it is not and does not intend to be an identification guide. It is in fact a detailed site guide to the full range of natural history that an observer is likely to encounter in and around these desert islands.

The very interesting and informative introductory sections in the chapter on 'Landscapes' cover a wide range of topics including geology, evolution, habitats and history. The next chapter covers 'Flora and

fauna', with sections on flora, mammals, birds, reptiles and insects and other invertebrates. These discuss in more detail some of the species that can be encountered during a visit to these islands.

The most important section is the third chapter, the 'Practical part', which is devoted to the various routes and sites that one can undertake or visit to see the diverse wildlife associated with Lanzarote and Fuerteventura. This section is illustrated with many good photographs of the wildlife and a good sketch map for each of the routes.

The directions given are accurate and precise and the routes are easy to follow using the text. Be warned, though, that for route 7 it would be advisable to use a 4x4 vehicle if attempting section 3, where the route goes along the barranco. I have driven this a few times in conventional vehicles and only twice have I made the drive successfully.

The final sections of the book include 'Tourist information', 'Observation tips' and a bird

list for the two islands. This last gives an idea of the status of many species occurring on the islands and is a useful reference for those without a more detailed bird guide.

One criticism is that the route to Pico de La Zarza is not described in detail, as this location is probably the most important place on Fuerteventura for the endemic flora. Also in my opinion, the photograph labelled as Plain Swift on page 148 appears much more like a Pallid Swift, looking at the face pattern and body shape.

As a final point I think that an index would have been a useful addition, as searching through trying to locate sites for various particular species can be very time consuming and could have been made much easier. However, as I regularly visit Fuerteventura I will certainly



make sure that this interesting and practical guide is included in my luggage on future visits.

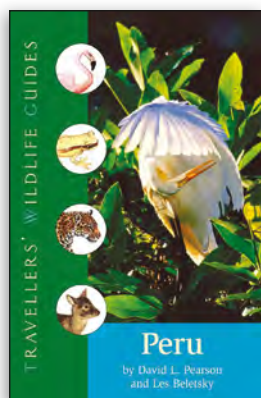
**Tony Clarke**

## More info

- *Crossbill Guide: Canary Islands 1: Lanzarote and Fuerteventura* by Dirk Hilbers and Kees Woutersen (Crossbill Guides, Arnhem, The Netherlands, 2014).
- 176 pages, numerous colour photos.
- ISBN 9789491648045. Pbk, £20.95.



# Introducing Peru's wildlife



**LES** Beletsky clearly cites his Travellers' Wildlife Guides series as books for the ecotourist – those travellers that are environmentally conscious – rather than the 'hardcore' naturalist. Indeed, the series' concept is essentially to introduce a nation's wildlife to the reader, rather than act as a complete reference.

For many with a casual or blossoming interest in wildlife, traditional field guides can often present themselves as challenging – even daunting – given the detail within. The idea of a single, introductory book which provides information on the most commonly encountered plants and animals within a country is therefore a good one, and something that could easily go on to build lasting bridges between interested readers and the natural world.

This certainly applies to the subject country of the reviewed title: Peru. Were this in any way an attempt at an exhaustive guide to the nation's flora and fauna it would be immovable, such as the incredible levels

of biodiversity within this South American nation. Thankfully this is not the case, and the book slots very easily into a travel bag; to put it in to perspective, the title is of a similar size to (if not a little lighter than) the country's birding tome, *Birds of Peru* by Schulenberg *et al.*

That instantly gives you a rough idea of the level of detail the Travellers' Wildlife Guide achieves. It covers more than 320 of Peru's most familiar bird species – a more-than-ample selection for the traveller with a passing to keen interest in wildlife. Birds occupy the bulk of the book's 99 plates, most of which consist of colour illustrations, though there are a few colour photographs. Also included are mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and various insects including both Lepidoptera and Odonata.

Illustration quality is good to excellent throughout. I was particularly impressed by the amphibians section which depicts a range of Peru's weird and wonderful frog species in a very realistic manner. Unfortunately the standard of the photographs in the (admittedly minor) arthropods section is distinctly average.

The main text is very good: it is accurate and carries enough detail for the book to be taken seriously by keen naturalists yet still considered accessible to all. Aside from the chapters on each class, there is an informative introduction to Peru, its geography (including climate) and its habitats, which includes illustrations of commonly encountered vegetation.

This is a very likeable title



packed with enough information to enthuse and educate prospective visitors to Peru. Not only does it provide background reading, but will double up as a perfectly adequate field guide – don't expect to be able to identify everything you see, but this title will act as a decent reference book.

For keen birders interested in other fauna (particularly mammals), it'll act as a compliment to the essential *Birds of Peru*. For those visiting Peru with a less stringent attitude to its flora and fauna, or at least certain aspects of it, this is a useful and informative title. **Josh Jones**

## More info

- *Travellers' Wildlife Guides: Peru* by David L. Pearson and Les Beletsky (Interlink Books, Massachusetts, USA, 2015).
- 520 pages, numerous colour illustrations and photos.
- ISBN 9781566565455. Pbk, £18.99.

## BOOKSHELF



It's nearly time for Birdfair again, and **Heather O'Connor** is hard at work selecting the best bargain titles to offer to Bookshop customers.

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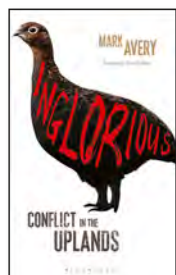
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Ber Van Perlo

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# ebookguide



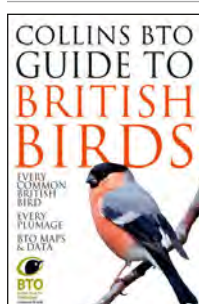
## Editor's choice



**The Sound Approach to Birding:  
a Guide to Understanding Bird Sound**  
By Mark Constantine and The Sound Approach  
**RRP/Price: £14.99**

This award-winning first title from The Sound Approach team has been transformed into a smart interactive ebook. Taking you on a fascinating journey, it will enable you to understand bird sound, with more than 200 high-quality recordings of mostly European species easily enjoyed with the simple tap of the screen. Suitable for birders of all experience levels, this is the must-have guide to a complex but fascinating subject – if you buy no other book on bird songs and calls, ensure you have this one in your collection.

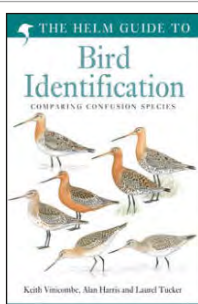
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**Collins BTO Guide to British Birds**  
By Paul Sterry and Paul Stancliffe  
**RRP/Price: £16.85**

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Featuring all of Britain and Ireland's regular species, this unique new identification guide is designed for use in the field, with text and photographs depicting the key features needed to identify any species with confidence.



**The Helm Guide to Bird Identification**  
By Keith Vinicombe  
**RRP: £25.00  
Price: £21.99**

**BUY**

This best-selling ID guide looks at tricky species pairs or groups of birds, comparing and contrasting their respective features. Designed as a field companion, it supplements standard field guides and provides detailed additional information.



**Birds of the Iberian Peninsula**  
By Eduardo de Juana and Ernest Garcia  
**RRP: £60  
Price: £49.99**

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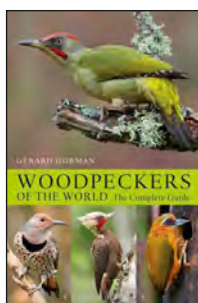
This new title is the first comprehensive guide to the avifauna of one of Europe's most ornithologically varied regions, and covers all species recorded in Spain, Portugal and Gibraltar, as well as the Berlengas and Balearic Islands.



**Owls of the World:  
A Photographic Guide**  
By Heimo Mikkola  
**RRP/Price: £21.99**

**BUY**

The ultimate resource dedicated to these charismatic predators, in ebook form optimised for tablets, with crisp, fully zoomable photography plus a definitive and truly comprehensive sound archive of more than 500 songs and calls.



**Woodpeckers of the World: the Complete Guide**  
By Gerard Gorman  
**RRP: £29.99  
Price: £19.49**

**BUY**

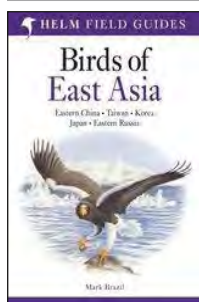
This stunning photographic guide covers all 239 species of woodpecker. The concise text looks in detail at their biology, with particular emphasis on field identification, as well as voice, habitat, status, racial variation and distribution.



**The Warbler Guide**  
By Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle  
**RRP: £23.94  
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**BUY**

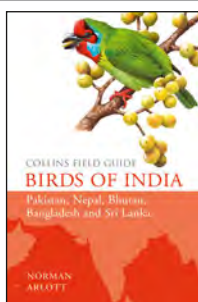
This groundbreaking guide features more than 1,000 stunning colour photos, extensive species accounts with multiple viewing angles, and an entirely new system of vocalisation analysis that helps you distinguish songs and calls.



**Birds of East Asia**  
By Mark Brazil  
**RRP/Price: £19.99**

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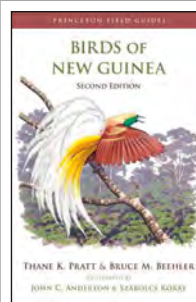
Featuring high-resolution and fully zoomable colour plates, plus comprehensive identification text and accurate range maps, this enhanced ebook also contains songs and calls, making it a truly indispensable guide for any trip to the region.



**Birds of India**  
By Norman Arlott  
**RRP: £19.99  
Price: £12.99**

**BUY**

This attractive Collins field guide covers all bird species occurring in Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Andaman Islands, the Nicobar Islands and the Maldives, with beautiful artwork and comprehensive text.



**Birds of New Guinea**  
By Thane K Pratt and Bruce M Beehler  
**RRP: £41.94  
Price: £27.26**

**BUY**

This completely revised second edition is the only guide to cover all 780 bird species recorded in the area. With added colour plates and maps, this book also has updated text with new information on ID, voice, habits and range.



# appguide



## Editor's choice



### Collins Bird Guide

Reimagined for iPad and iPhone, this intuitive app combines the acclaimed illustrations and species accounts of the field guide with scalable maps and vocalisations for over 700 species; there's even an optional video library. The only downside is no Android version.



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### Birds of Britain and Ireland (Pro Edition)

This high-quality digital field guide covers 271 species regularly occurring in Britain and Ireland. Comprehensive information includes multiple illustrations and photos, audio recordings of songs and calls, distribution maps and detailed text from *BWP Concise*.



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Arguably the leading cross-platform listing app, Bird Journal lets you record, explore and share your bird and wildlife observations, sync data across multiple devices and submit to BirdTrack or eBird. The premium edition is £39.99, but is a worthwhile upgrade for the many extra features. Recommended.



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### Bird Songs Europe

Probably the best audio resource for Western Palearctic bird sounds, featuring 2,833 recordings of 802 species, together with spectrograms, 1,350 photos, 600 maps, Wikipedia links and the facility to create a sightings list. It's undeniably expensive, but unrivalled for use in the field.



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This simple but practical app is great for listing your bird sightings. The latest version now starts with a blank database, allowing users to select British, Western Palearctic or North American base lists before they start ticking. Sites visited are also linked with Google Maps. A snip at this bargain price.



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Fast and easy to use, this handy app allows you to note all the species you see or hear, including time and exact location, both of which are automatically recorded. You can review sightings as a list or on a Google map, upload them to eBird and do much more. Android users pay just £9.08.



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### eGuide to Birds of the Middle East

One of the new generation of 'book apps', this eGuide features all the plates, text and maps from the Helm print edition, but with the bonus of audio recordings of 400 species and a 'Compare' facility, allowing two birds to be displayed together on the same screen.



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### The Sibley eGuide to the Birds of North America

The contents of America's leading field guide have been repurposed in this intuitive digital version, which boasts audio recordings alongside the plates, text and maps from the print edition. A listing feature lets North American users set location to filter species.



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- 10:1 Ratio Dual-Speed Focuser
- Lightweight Polycarbonate Body

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|                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
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| Specification          | 15-45x60ED         |
| Magnification          | 15x-45x            |
| Object Lens Diameter   | 60mm               |
| Field of View          | 2.8° - 1.3°        |
| Actual Field of View   | 49m-23m@1000m      |
| Eye Relief             | 20-18mm            |
| Nearest Focus Distance | 5m                 |
| Weight                 | 1280g              |



Fieldmaster-ED60DS  
Product Code 40908

### FIELDMASTER ED80DS

#### 20-60x80ED

- Triplet Objective Lens
- 10:1 Ratio Dual-Speed Focuser
- Lightweight Polycarbonate Body

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| Model                  | Fieldmaster-ED80DS |
| Specification          | 20-60x80ED         |
| Magnification          | 20x-60x            |
| Object Lens Diameter   | 80mm               |
| Field of View          | 2.1° - 1°          |
| Actual Field of View   | 37m-13m@1000m      |
| Eye Relief             | 20-18mm            |
| Nearest Focus Distance | 4m                 |
| Weight                 | 2450g              |



Fieldmaster-ED80DS  
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- Doublet Objective Lens
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- Outstanding Optical Performance

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| Specification          | 20-60x85ED                 |
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| Object Lens Diameter   | 85mm                       |
| Field of view          | 2.1° - 1.1°                |
| Actual Field of View   | 36m-20m@1000m              |
| Eye Relief             | 20-18mm                    |
| Nearest Focus Distance | 6m                         |
| Weight                 | 1982g                      |



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| Model                  | Fieldmaster-ED82DS Triplet |
| Specification          | 20-60x82ED                 |
| Magnification          | 20x-60x                    |
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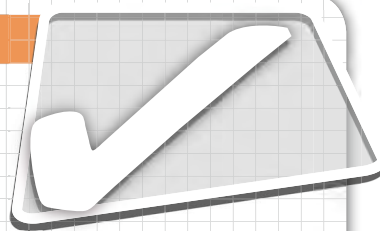
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## HOW TO ...

PART

6

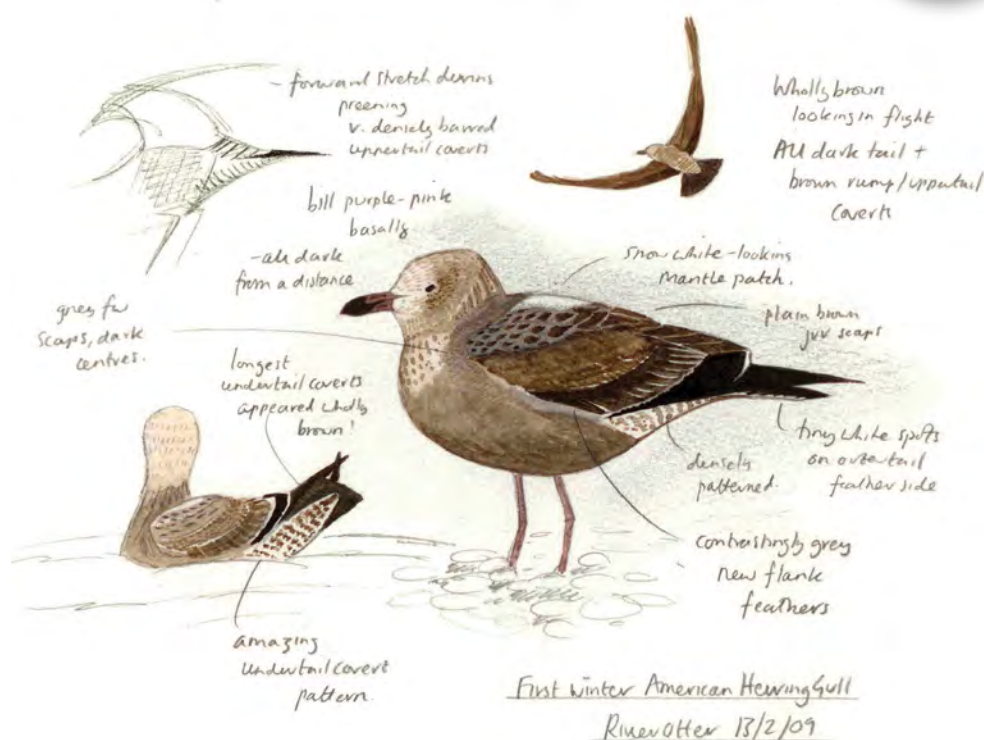


# Make great field sketches

**WHEN** I embarked on this series I argued the case for field notes, intending to convince more birders to give it a try or to rekindle those old, perhaps almost forgotten skills. For this final part I requested field sketches from a few birders I admire, one a skilled field artist, the others whose knowledge of the subject enables them to observe and make accurate notes with a high degree of illustration. I also posed a question to them: do you reach for the camera or notebook first? The responses were brutally honest – for most the camera comes first.

Few modern birders will find this answer surprising, but I do feel it is to the detriment of our own observational skills, something which surely is essential when birding. A camera will capture an image or video, but maybe we place too much emphasis on a split-second photo or short video grab. So often the real-time study of a bird will be much more meaningful to observers. Digital cameras are notorious for not always picking up subtle colours, and then there's the problem of processing the images and colour calibration of monitors.

I read with interest an online debate between observers of a Pallid Swift at Hartlepool Headland, Co Durham, in 2013. Initial comments from those only having seen a few good photographs favoured Common Swift, but observers continued to argue the case for Pallid. Finally more photos 'proved' the record beyond doubt to be Pallid Swift. Had the bird not stuck around for



**Matt Knott's sketch is an excellent example of an American Herring Gull. He found the bird on the Otter Estuary, Devon, in February 2009. He believes that sketching makes you look harder at the birds.**

more photos, would the record had been destined for the dustbin – despite observation and notes from observers adamant it was a Pallid Swift?

Birding Frontiers' Martin Garner is an excellent field birder. In the past he would make a lot of notes. He replied to my question regarding camera or notebook by saying: "How do you best gather and process information?" ... "Now I have a decent camera I mentally ask questions and take photos and record what I've seen"

and "Occasionally I'll doodle notes". As birders we are all becoming aware bird identification seems to be intensely more subtle, and Martin rightly points out that "cameras record details that you almost certainly never see in the field".

Devon-based bird finder Matt Knott is an enthusiastic note taker. However, even he admits that the camera comes first, explaining: "Photos provide incontrovertible evidence, a big factor I think in a hyper-sceptical

internet age." But Matt's closing comments raised my spirits: "Sketching keeps you sharper and makes you look harder – I value my sketches a million times more than my photos!"

John Walters is a very talented natural history field artist, yet even he will always carry a camera as well as his sketching and painting kit. "It depends on what I see as to which way of recording I choose; some encounters are going to be very brief so maybe I can capture a photo or video."



## THIS MONTH'S EXPERT PANEL



**DOMINIC MITCHELL** is Birdwatch's founder and Managing Editor, and author and editor of several bird books. He has been birding for more than 40 years.



**CHRIS HARBARD** After many years at the RSPB, Chris is now a tour leader, writer and editor, dividing his time between Britain and the USA.



**DAVID CALLAHAN** Prior to joining Birdwatch as staff writer, David trained as a taxonomist at the Natural History Museum.



**JOSH JONES** is well known as BirdGuides' News Team Manager. He has been obsessed by all things birdy since he was a toddler.



**HEIN VAN GROUW** is Curator of Birds at the Natural History Museum in Tring. He has a lifelong interest in colour mutations in birds.



**MIKE LANGMAN** is a full-time bird illustrator whose work has featured in numerous books, as well as at almost every RSPB reserve.

## 84 Your questions answered

Our panel of experts tackles your latest avian conundrums.

## 86 Competition

Your chance to win an ultimate Big Wild Sleepout Kit from the RSPB and Rohan.

## 86 Listcheck

Recent research sheds light on Russett Bush Warbler taxonomy.

## 87 Birdfair tackles illegal bird killing

Find out all about this year's Birdfair project and what's on.

## Drawing inspiration

If you've been inspired by our series on making great field sketches, we'd love to see the results. You can scan and email your work to [editorial@birdwatch.co.uk](mailto:editorial@birdwatch.co.uk), or post it to Birdwatch magazine, The Chocolate Factory, 5 Clarendon Road, London N22 6XJ. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you would like your sketches returned.



Martin Garner's sketch from 2002 compares a possible 'Continental' Goldcrest (lower bird) with a more typical British individual.

Reassuringly, John gets huge satisfaction from field sketching: "The reward for this is that I get to see some amazing, rarely seen behaviour and interactions. I've spent many hours over the last few winters following Long-tailed Tits, looking at places they feed and roost. Sketching on the foot like this is demanding, but the knowledge gained gives me great pleasure and respect for these tiny birds – I only go out on fine days, they are out 24/7 throughout the winter!"

As a regular land-based seawatcher I know the inadequacies of cameras when faced with a long-range seabird in dull light and windy conditions. There are very few exceptions where a camera can provide much in the way of evidence, with one of the greatest recent exceptions being the Red-billed Tropicbird at Pendeen, Cornwall, two years ago.

Making notes on something unusual is still the only way to accurately document a passing



John Walters has spent many hours in the field observing Long-tailed Tits. He created these stunning sketches based on what he saw.

rare seabird; however, you seldom get a second chance, as most birds fly by and don't return. If you're planning on seawatching this autumn, honing your note-taking skills now could be a wise move.

If you have enjoyed the sketches throughout this series and some of those in the 'Your letters and photos' pages, including the beautiful drawings of the dancing Common Cranes by Jane Holford Atkin in last month's issue, then field notes still have a place in today's

birding. Give it a try – I can promise you'll learn more about the bird's character and plumage in a few minutes than perhaps you have learnt in years of birdwatching.

The Birdwatch team would love to see and publish more of your field sketches – maybe of some of the autumn's scarcities and rarities or even, like John Walters, some very personal sketches of a commoner species. See the box above for details of where to send them. ■



# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



**Q** I managed to take a few photos of an albino House Sparrow fledgling today, which I could identify as there was a female of the species feeding it. I wonder how rare they are? Howard Butler, via email

**A** Hein van Grouw of the Natural History Museum Bird Group, *Tring*, replies: "Perhaps the most commonly reported plumage abnormalities are those that involve some form of white feathering, whether this is just a few white feathers on an otherwise normally coloured bird or an individual that is completely white.

A variety of names continue to be used seemingly randomly to identify these aberrations. Most often wrongly applied are the terms 'albino' or 'partial albino'. Because albinos cannot produce melanin pigment at all, partial albino is simply impossible. The aberration albino is far less common than thought, and aberrant white feathers are hardly ever caused by albinism – usually they derive from a form of leucism or progressive greying.

Albinism, from the Latin *albus*, meaning white, can be defined as a total lack of melanin in feathers, eyes and skin. This results from the hereditary absence of the enzyme tyrosinase in pigment cells, meaning that melanin cannot be produced, and usually resulting in a completely colourless bird. The red or pinkish hue that can be seen in the eyes and skin is caused by blood becoming visible through the colourless

tissue. Albino birds are rarely seen in the wild, although the mutation is not uncommon and occurs quite frequently in most populations. However, the absence of melanin in the eyes makes them highly sensitive to light, causing poor eyesight, which makes albinos vulnerable to predation.

Leucism, from the Greek *leukos* (also meaning white), can be defined as the lack of melanin from all or parts of the plumage and skin. The extent of white feathering can vary,

from just a few white feathers (partially leucistic) to the plumage being completely white (100 per cent leucistic). Partially leucistic birds may have a normally coloured bill and feet, depending on where the colourless patches occur, but all leucistic birds have normally coloured eyes. The white pattern in leucistic birds is often patchy and bilaterally symmetrical; most commonly the head, wing-tips, feet and belly are affected. The white pattern occurs in juvenile plumage and the amount of white feathering does not change with age.

Progressive greying arises after a bird reaches a certain age and is defined as the progressive loss of pigment cells with age. From the onset, the bird will gain an increasing number of white feathers after every moult and in many birds the entire plumage eventually becomes white. The causes of progressive greying are still unknown and it may or may not be heritable. This condition is actually the most common cause of white feathers in birds.

Much is still unknown and research especially on progressive greying is ongoing. You can help by reporting your sightings of aberrantly coloured birds to the British Trust for Ornithology. Please take part in the Abnormal Plumage Survey and upload your records and photographs of aberrant birds at [www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/gbw/about/background/projects/plumage](http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/gbw/about/background/projects/plumage). This will greatly assist us in clarifying this phenomenon in greater detail, identify which species are affected most often and where these birds are being found." ■

**Q** I saw this bird carrying nest material in an area known for Cetti's Warblers – is this bird that species? I'm having trouble identifying it. Caroline, via Twitter

**A** Dominic Mitchell, Birdwatch Managing Editor, replies: "While many warblers are superficially similar, this is not a Cetti's Warbler, I'm sorry to say. Being slightly larger, Cetti's would appear more robust, with warm, consistently reddish-brown upperparts, grey cheeks and breast sides, and an off-white throat. It also has a thin white supercilium highlighted below by a 'mascara'-line of black. So what is it then? It's drab enough to be a Common Chiffchaff, but on balance I think it's a Willow Warbler – note the long primary projection (with uneven spacing between the primary tips), as well as the pale orange legs and a fairly distinct supercilium above the eye." ■





# The Big Question: brooding waders

**Q** I read with great interest the article entitled Father's Day on page 87 of your June issue. It describes the reversed roles of Dotterel and Red-necked Phalarope females, which lay eggs then depart, leaving the male to incubate. Does this mean that males have a brood patch and females not, I wonder? The same article also mentions several other wader species where the female lays two clutches of eggs, incubating one itself and leaving the other for the male. In this case do both sexes have a brood patch? *Colin Straker, via email*

**A** John Marchant, author of *Shorebirds: an identification guide to the waders of the world*, replies: "Waders have three small brood patches among their long belly feathers that are much less obvious than the single large one on a passerine bird, functioning as warming pads for roaming chicks as well as incubation."

Wader species worldwide are remarkably diverse in their breeding strategies, but in nearly all species it's normal for both males and females to incubate, whether for the same or different clutches, and for brood patches to be developed by both sexes. Despite their sex-role reversal, female Dotterels do incubate to an extent that varies across their range. The three phalarope species are more extreme,



Female Dotterels, like this bird at the regular spring stop-over point of Pendle Hill, Lancashire, last year, incubate their eggs despite their species' well-known sex-role reversal.

KIT DAY

with females typically leaving the breeding grounds and beginning body moult as soon as their eggs are laid. If vestigial brood patches do develop in female phalaropes, they would presumably be very short lived and would be very hard to detect." ■

**Q** Lovely *Catharus* thrushes in last month's *Birdwatch* (pages 8-10) – but what happens to these and other rarities, once identified? By definition, they are far out of their normal range, and presumably what lies ahead is a lonely life and an early death?

*Crawford Macdonald, via email*

**A** Josh Jones of *BirdGuides* replies: "What exactly happens to lost vagrants likely varies between individuals. Some larger species, such as wildfowl and shorebirds, have been known to return to their native ranges – there are ringing recoveries to prove this. In the case of American species, some will adopt a lifestyle on this side of the Atlantic that effectively mirrors the pattern they would otherwise show in their native range – for example, a lost American Wigeon might settle with native Eurasian Wigeon and simply migrate back and forth

with them for the rest of its life.

In the case of landbirds, the outlook is a little bleaker. Somewhat less well designed to cope with long-distance maritime crossings, it's likely that many simply perish in the days and weeks after arriving on our shores. However, there is evidence to suggest that some do survive – as the Mourning Dove first recorded in Co Galway, Ireland, in November 2007 showed when it turned up in Denmark the following May! Whether the *Catharus* thrushes (or indeed any other American landbird) ever return to their native ranges is unknown, but it seems unlikely." ■



Swainson's Thrush on Skokholm, Pembrokeshire, in June – where did it go after it disappeared from Wales?

IAN BEGGS

**Q** I took this photo (left) on a visit to Titchwell RSPB reserve on 2 July. On looking at the bill I thought it might be a juvenile Bullfinch and this view seemed to be reinforced when a female of that species landed in the same bush about 18 inches from the bird. However, checking my field guide and the internet, I could find nothing that looked like this bird. Could you let me know what it is?

*Paul Lock, via email*

**A** David Callahan replies: "Despite this bird's unusual appearance, your first assumption that it was a Bullfinch was indeed correct."

The black cap stopping just underneath the eye, the all-black forked tail contrasting with the white vent, and the short but robust black bill all suggest this species. However, the most obvious signifier is the bright pink cheeks, chest and flanks, a colour only found in this species, especially when in combination with the features already mentioned.

I would fully expect this saturated pink coloration to entirely cover its belly once the bird has dried out, because that's why it looks odd – it has been bathing or otherwise got soaked in water." ■

## Have you got a question for our experts?

Send your queries to us via social media at

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in to: **Your Questions Answered, Birdwatch, The Chocolate Factory, 5 Clarendon Road, London N22 6XJ.**



# Win an ultimate Big Wild Sleepout kit!

**THE** RSPB's Big Wild Sleepout is aimed at encouraging families to spend a night outside to get acquainted with the nature they share their home with. It can be in your own back garden, a local park or at one of the events organised at RSPB reserves across the country.

The sleepout will take place over the weekend of 7-9 August.

Night-time adventures will differ for each event, but could include outdoor cooking, storytelling around a campfire or torchlight safaris. To find out more, go to [www.rspb.org.uk/sleepout](http://www.rspb.org.uk/sleepout).

*Birdwatch* has teamed up with the RSPB and Rohan to give our readers the chance to win a sleepout kit worth more than

£600. The kit contains everything you need to spend a night in the great outdoors, including outdoor clothing and equipment, supplied by Rohan, and a selection of RSPB nature goodies.

To enter, simply tell us how you intend to take part in the Big Wild Sleepout. Email your answer to [editorial@](mailto:editorial@birdwatch.co.uk)

[birdwatch.co.uk](http://birdwatch.co.uk), or by post to *Birdwatch*, The Chocolate Factory, 5 Clarendon Road, London N22 6XJ. Be quick though – to ensure the winner receives their kit in time for the event, entries must be received by 4 August. ■

## What's in the kit

- Rohan Escapist jacket
- Rohan Trailblazers trousers
- Rohan Microgrid fleece
- Rohan Freight vest for men
- Rohan Sanctuary shirt for women
- Rohan Canopy cape
- Rohan Convey shorts
- Rohan Socks
- BugLit LED micro-light
- Rite in the Rain notebook
- RSPB Puffin 8x32 binoculars
- RSPB Classic Apex nestbox
- RSPB 365 Outdoor Activities You Have to Try!
- RSPB Where to Discover Nature in Britain
- RSPB Keepcup
- Gnome light
- Singing Tawny Owl toy
- Love Nature wildflowers bathroom gift set
- A guide to British bats fold-out chart



## News round-up

### MAIN STORY Dams reduce biodiversity

Widely hailed as 'green' sources of renewable energy, hydroelectric dams have now been shown by researchers to reduce biodiversity in the tropical forests of the Brazilian Amazon, resulting in a local extinction rate of 70 per cent.

• [bit.ly/bw278hydroelectric](http://bit.ly/bw278hydroelectric)

### ■ Celebrities back protection of EU Nature Directives

Kate Humble and Miranda Krestovnikoff backed the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) and RSPB as they called to retain EU laws that protect Britain's wildlife. • [bit.ly/bw278EULaws](http://bit.ly/bw278EULaws)

### ■ Rarest breeding seabird passes the 100-pair mark

Roseate Tern has enjoyed a record breeding season on Coquet Island RSPB, Northumberland, with more than 100 pairs currently nesting.

• [bit.ly/bw278roseateterns](http://bit.ly/bw278roseateterns)

## LISTCHECK

# Updating avian taxonomy

## At least five in the bush

**RUSSETT** Bush Warbler *Locustella mandelli* is a widespread and fairly nondescript species ranging from the eastern Himalayas to China and Indonesia. Previously considered to involve between one and four separate species, to settle this number researchers performed analyses of specimens from across its range involving DNA, biometrics and vocalisations.

Central Chinese individuals of *L. mandelli* differed in all three categories, and were separated by range and altitude when their ranges met. The authors consider the endemic central Chinese birds to be differentiated enough to constitute a new species, which they have described as Sichuan Bush Warbler *L. chengi*. The research also confirmed the species level status of Benguet *L. seebohmi*, Javan *L. montis* and Tay Nguyen *L. idonea* Bush Warblers, as well as highlighting potential vocal differences in an unnamed population in western Myanmar. ■



**Sichuan Bush Warbler was breeding in anonymity in central China until specimens of 'Russet Bush Warbler' from the area were analysed during research.**

PER ALSTRÖM

## REFERENCE

- Alström, P, Xia, C, Rasmussen, P C, Olsson, U, Dai, B, Zhao, J, Leader, P J, Carey, T G, Dong, L, Cai, T, Holt, P I, Manh, H L, Song, G, Liu, Y, Zhang, Y, and Lei, F. 2015. Integrative taxonomy of the Russet Bush Warbler *Locustella mandelli* complex reveals a new species from central China. *Avian Research* 6: 1-32.

## In the digital edition

**AUGUST'S** digital edition has a plethora of additional content, including:

- Movies and sound files of Dunlin and White-rumped and Curlew Sandpipers.
- Footage of rarities and scarcities from across the Britain and Ireland, and the Western Palearctic.
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## NEWS

# Birdfair to raise funds for the fight against illegal bird killing



TOM MCILLROY

TV presenter Chris Packham, who has worked hard to bring to the public's attention the plight of birds migrating through the eastern Mediterranean, will give a talk at the fair.

**THIS** month sees the 27th British Birdwatching Fair, which again will be held at Rutland Water Nature Reserve and runs from 21-23 August 2015. This year the Birdfair will be raising funds to stop the illegal killing of migratory birds in the eastern Mediterranean. Always a hot topic, it has gained considerable publicity in Britain recently, especially through the work of TV presenter and naturalist Chris Packham. Funds raised by the Birdfair will support BirdLife International projects aimed at stopping this sickening slaughter.

Famous faces always put in

an appearance, and this year is no exception, with a special Friday evening event, sponsored by Carl Zeiss Ltd, in which Nick Baker, Simon King and Chris Packham will mix anecdotes and confessions with a look at what brought them into conservation, and what successes and sacrifices have been involved. Other events will feature BBC *Springwatch* presenters Martin Hughes-Games and Iolo Williams, and there are also the popular celebrity cruises.

A wide range of exhibitors will ensure that there is something for everyone, with everything from

exotic overseas trips and the latest optics to clothing and bird seed and feeders for your garden. For the bird photographer, new cameras, lenses and accessories will all be on display. Large organisations such as the RSPB and British Trust for Ornithology will be there, but there are also many smaller bodies worth checking out, such as the British Arachnological Society for those keen on spiders.

Among the many new book titles available are Bloomsbury's *Inglorious* by Mark Avery, *The Complete Naturalist* by Nick Baker, *In Pursuit of Butterflies* by Matthew Oates and *Nextinction* by Ralph Steadman. Also find out about the enhanced guides, now available for Android phones and tablets by using the Bloomsbury Bird Guides app. Look out for the new *Collins BTO Guide to Rare British Birds* by Paul Sterry and Paul Stancliffe and don't miss *Undiscovered Owls*, the recent title from The Sound Approach team.

The Birdwatch/BirdGuides stand is in Marquee 2, stands 97-100 (note that marquee numbers have changed this year). Visit to meet members of the team and to take advantage of the great offer of a free pair of Regatta walking boots worth £70 when you subscribe to *Birdwatch* on direct debit, plus up to 30 per cent savings on BirdGuides news services, bird books at discount prices and the

latest issue of the magazine on sale before it hits the shops.

There will also be book signings on the stand. Mark Avery will be autographing copies of *Inglorious* (see pages 36-39 for an exclusive extract from this title). Check with staff on the stand and on Twitter for details of times and more signings as we confirm them (follow us at [www.twitter.com/BirdwatchExtra](http://www.twitter.com/BirdwatchExtra)).

The annual Birdfair mural is always a great attraction – come and watch some of Britain's finest wildlife artists illustrate some of the rare and magnificent birds which suffer from illegal killing in the Mediterranean, including Red-footed Falcon, Sociable Lapwing and Pallid Harrier. Other fabulous art, from paintings and prints to jewellery and sculpture, will be on display in the Art Marquee. Don't miss Chris Rose's paintings for the forthcoming *Robins and Chats* identification guide from Helm, written by Peter Clement.

With migratory birds featuring centre stage, find out more about the problems they face by visiting organisations such as BirdLife Cyprus, and don't miss the BirdLife International lecture by Claire Thompson. She will be taking a look at the projects that the Birdfair is supporting. More than 200 talks will take place over the three days in the Lecture Marquees, covering a wide range of topics to do with birds, birding and conservation. ■

## SUNDAY HIGH TIDES IN AUGUST

Full moon date is Saturday 29 August

|                              | 2nd   | 9th   | 16th  | 23rd  | 30th  |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Exe Estuary (Starcross)      | 08.59 | 02.16 | 08.50 | 00.24 | 07.55 |
| Devon                        | 21.18 | 14.55 | 21.03 | 12.50 | 20.15 |
| Poole Harbour (town quay)    | 11.21 | 05.53 | 11.00 | 03.22 | 10.18 |
| Dorset                       | 23.27 | 18.33 | 18.08 | 16.31 | 22.29 |
| Langstone Harbour (Northney) | 01.23 | 07.51 | 01.18 | 05.46 | 00.18 |
| Hampshire                    | 13.52 | 20.25 | 13.41 | 18.14 | 12.45 |
| Thames Estuary (Sheerness)   | 02.31 | 08.35 | 02.17 | 06.40 | 01.22 |
| Kent                         | 14.50 | 21.07 | 14.31 | 19.03 | 13.43 |
| London Bridge                | 03.48 | 09.44 | 03.36 | 07.52 | 02.39 |
| Greater London               | 16.08 | 22.16 | 15.50 | 20.14 | 15.01 |
| Colne Estuary (Wivenhoe)     | 02.05 | 08.12 | 01.53 | –     | 00.58 |
| Essex                        | 13.39 | 20.43 | 14.08 | 12.17 | 13.19 |
| Blakeney Harbour             | 08.35 | 02.43 | 08.28 | 00.42 | 07.29 |
| Norfolk                      | 20.59 | 15.20 | 20.46 | 13.13 | 19.53 |
| Hunstanton                   | 08.19 | 02.14 | 08.10 | 00.13 | 07.15 |
| Norfolk                      | 20.47 | 14.49 | 20.33 | 12.35 | 19.43 |
| Blacktoft                    | 08.42 | 02.44 | 08.34 | 00.48 | 07.36 |
| Yorkshire                    | 21.07 | 15.19 | 20.54 | 13.16 | 20.01 |

|                              | 2nd   | 9th   | 16th  | 23rd  | 30th  |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Teesmouth                    | 05.34 | –     | 05.21 | 09.51 | 04.30 |
| Durham/Yorkshire             | 18.05 | 12.05 | 17.46 | 22.29 | 17.01 |
| Holy Island                  | 04.22 | 10.38 | 04.11 | 08.32 | 03.17 |
| Northumberland               | 16.49 | 23.14 | 16.33 | 21.01 | 15.44 |
| Firth of Forth (Cockenzie)   | 04.45 | 10.58 | 04.25 | 08.42 | 03.41 |
| Lothian                      | 17.16 | 23.41 | 16.50 | 21.20 | 16.13 |
| Morecambe Bay                | 01.03 | 07.28 | 00.53 | 05.20 | –     |
| Lancashire                   | 13.28 | 20.09 | 13.12 | 17.54 | 12.23 |
| Dee Estuary (Hilbre)         | 00.37 | 07.07 | 00.30 | 04.59 | 11.57 |
| Cheshire                     | 13.02 | 19.49 | 12.49 | 17.34 | –     |
| Loughor Estuary (Burry Port) | 08.20 | 02.15 | 08.08 | 00.08 | 07.16 |
| Carmarthenshire              | 20.41 | 14.55 | 20.23 | 12.38 | 19.37 |
| Severn Estuary (Berkeley)    | 09.56 | 03.42 | 09.48 | 01.45 | 08.52 |
| Gloucestershire              | 22.18 | 16.20 | 22.05 | 14.13 | 21.14 |
| Belfast                      | 00.47 | 07.13 | 00.37 | 05.17 | –     |
| Co Down                      | 13.17 | 19.53 | 13.02 | 17.52 | 12.10 |
| Dublin (North Wall)          | 01.29 | 07.52 | 01.12 | 05.44 | 00.23 |
| Co Dublin                    | 14.00 | 20.32 | 13.36 | 18.21 | 12.54 |



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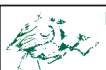
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ROBERT CANIS

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■ **Rare arrivals** With autumn migration in full swing by September, off-course wanderers from all points of the compass will be reaching our shores. The phenomenon is well known and increasingly well studied by bird observatories and by the British Trust for Ornithology, whose new *Rare Birds Guide* helps explain the factors involved.

■ **Wising up** A diurnal representative of a largely nocturnal family, Short-eared Owl is an intriguing – and sadly declining – predator. With its British breeding range halved in the last 50 years, many now know it best as a migrant and winter visitor. David Callahan looks at the life and times of a local favourite whose range extends around the globe.

■ **Take the identification challenge** There's always more to learn about bird ID, and next month Martin Garner challenges you to look again at a range of tricky species and forms, from assorted Common Eiders and arctic auks to Northern and Great Grey Shrikes, six types of redpoll and three of Snow Bunting, in an exclusive preview of his new *Challenge Series* seasonal title, *Winter*.

■ **Avian oasis** Lying on a major migration route and also boasting a unique mix of breeding birds, the underwatched kingdom of Jordan offers top-drawer birding against a spectacular backdrop of deserts, wadis, mountains and archaeological ruins. Dominic Mitchell goes in search of Sinai Rosefinch and other Middle Eastern specialities.

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## Man bats for Robin

**THERE** have been some vinegary responses to the fact that the Robin recently won the unofficial poll as 'national bird' [as predicted by Bill Oddie last month, page 94].

It is curious to note that in this there may still be a touch of intellectual snobbery about the popularity of this iconic bird. In the 19th century, the British Ornithologists' Union attempted to suppress the popular name 'Robin' which had derived from the folksy 'Robin Redbreast and Jenny Wren' and had become general usage when associated with the nickname of the red-coated postmen of the time. Redbreast survived as the official name into the 20th century, when Robin was reinstated.

What is also interesting is that the bird has been characterised by some in terms such as 'murderer' and 'bully'. However, Darwin assured us that competitive behaviour is the norm rather than the

exception in the natural world.

Those who disapprove of Robin are not the first to question the 'suitability' of a chosen emblem. One newspaper commentator pointed out that the Americans chose the worthy eagle, ignoring that even Benjamin Franklin disapproved of this choice. He wrote: "I wish that the Bald Eagle had not been chosen as ... he is a bird of bad moral character, he does not get his living honestly." Since birds cannot be cured of unattractive behavioural traits by the delivery of a good sermon, why waste time judging them by anthropomorphic standards?

In short, it seems to me that reasons for not accepting the well-loved Robin with good grace are based on dubious reasoning. The exercise was after all a bit of fun with the underlying purpose of engaging a wider public with birds. That is its real value.

**Ray Reedman, via email**

## Join the debate online

**twitter**

• The news that hydroelectric dams were shown to be far from environmentally friendly in Brazil caused comment.

@KitemanX: "But is there an alternative that is as powerful and as green? #dilemma."

• The RSPB issued its annual request to leave fledglings alone unless there's an obvious danger.

@Robval04: "Good to keep an eye from a distance just to make sure fledglings are ok. Chances are that parents are near."

**facebook**

• We posted Steve Backshall's complaint that the national media misreport nature news, and readers responded.

Richard Ford: "Truly sad that papers don't want to print facts like this I guess; sadly most people don't want to read them either, they're more interested in joining the scaremongering."

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## STEVE YOUNG'S PHOTO CHALLENGE

### The winner



**LAST** month's challenge was to photograph breeding auks at their colonies.

Steve Young said: "It looks like lots of people love auks, to judge by the number of entries for this month's challenge. However, for those that entered Puffin, I'm sorry, but I did say that it was excluded. But don't worry, that species will be the subject of a challenge in the not-too-distant future, so just send the images in again."

"It would also appear that Bempton Cliffs RSPB is a very popular spot during the spring and summer for Birdwatch photographers with Common Guillemots and Razorbills galore (and Puffins!) submitted."

"There is another auk that isn't found at Bempton, and this species was superbly photographed by Peter Garrity to become my winner. This Black Guillemot catching prey was one of a portfolio submitted by Peter and is a lovely image. Photographed at Port Patrick, Dumfries and Galloway, the exposure is spot-on for showing detail in the black plumage, while the flash of bright red legs and gape can be seen, and the nicely coloured water adds to the image."

"Congratulations to Peter, who wins this month's prize of RSPB Seabirds by Marianne Taylor."

• Turn to page 72 for this month's photo challenge.



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Photos by P. Marques

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**BILL ODDIE**


# Stringin' in the rain

A rained-out day at a well-known bird observatory could have been a disaster for **Bill Oddie**, but instead it delivered a tick and a 10th for Britain ...

Somewhere in my attic there is a photo of myself. Unlike Dorian Gray's, it never ages. I do, but I still remember the day that little black-and-white snap was taken. It shows me in bed, under a grey blanket, wearing binoculars, smoking a curly pipe and caressing a fully extended brass telescope, in a manner that suggests an intense emotional attachment.

Where was the photo taken? The clue is in my sweater. Post-war toddlers – which I was – were obliged to 'wrap up warm' in a Fair Isle cardigan before we 'played out', but as a teenager I progressed beyond the mass-produced Woolworth's version to the real thing: chunky and warm and knitted by the wife of a local crofter.

By now I dare say that you will have deduced that the photo was taken when I was staying at Fair Isle Bird Observatory. I don't recall the year, but it was well before the 'new obs' (recently opened), or the former 'new obs', known as the Birdwatcher's Hilton. I stayed at the 'very very old obs'.

In no way custom built, it was a cluster of ex-RAF huts, many of them dilapidated, used mainly for storing mouldy mattresses and broken bikes, and providing excellent accommodation for the rats that weren't keen on sharing with a visiting birder such as I. Heat and light came from a wood-burning fire, oil lamps and an emergency generator. We lived on porridge and cocoa.

In the photo I am clearly cosy and well fed, but the question it begs is this: if I am on Fair Isle in mid-September, in the late afternoon, with a tinge of easterly in the wind, why am I in bed? Because it was raining!

## And so to bed

It had been raining all day. I had done the pre-brekky trap round, clambering and slithering across slippery rocks and crevices. I returned soaked, bruised, bloodied and birdless. I devoured my porridge and announced that I was going back to bed. I was instantly accused of sacrilege and cowardice, called a "fairweather birder", and taunted by predictions that the deluge must have "brought something down", and that if I



**Above: a young Bill Oddie models his Fair Isle cardigan.**

**Above right: Citrine Wagtail has now occurred almost annually on Fair Isle this century, including this juvenile on 21 September 2012.**



CRAIG HOLDEN

stayed in bed I would miss it.

I countered by arguing that any bird that had been forced to make landfall because of bad weather was unlikely to take off again until conditions improved.

I also reminded them that several people's bins had already misted up and that their notebooks had got soaked because their anorak pockets leaked. I asked if they really enjoyed the icy trickle of rain water dribbling down their necks.

Most people tramped off intrepidly to cover the island, while I snuggled down and browsed through old bird reports, posed for my pipe and scope photo, and fell asleep. I was awakened by a strange light slicing through my cracked window. The sun was coming out, and within minutes so was I.

I tripped off to the south, passing other birders trudging back north. There was no need for conversation. They were dripping, I was dry. They'd found nothing. Neither had I. But I might. I was ungraciously relieved that I hadn't been gripped off. They were no doubt narked that I hadn't been punished for skiving. What if I now found something good? How would they feel? How would I?

We soon found out. I was barely half a mile down the road, when a jaunty little bird skipped from behind a dry stone wall, and cavorted around on the cliff-top turf. A juvenile Citrine Wagtail. New for me, and – at the time – only about the 10th British record. I felt a bit guilty, but not much. Sometimes the Isle is Fair, but life just isn't. ■

“I was instantly accused of sacrilege and cowardice and called a “fairweather birder””



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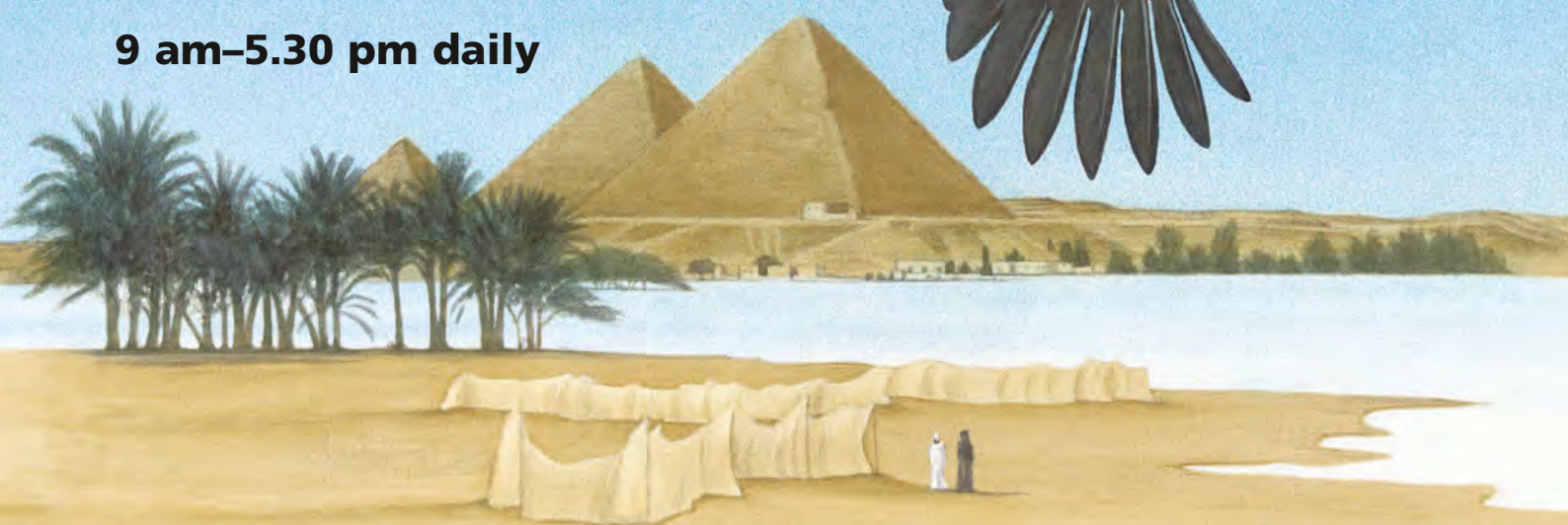




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# Welcome to the 27th Birdfair

Birdfair just keeps getting better and better! Well, that's the overriding opinion of the thousands who flock to Rutland Water each year in August. The Birdfair is now recognised as the world's most important wildlife event, raising hundreds of thousands of pounds for vital conservation projects as well as being the only location to launch new products to an eager and knowledgeable audience.

Last year Birdfair supported Birdlife International's 'Protecting the world's seas and oceans' project, focusing on areas around Antarctica. To our amazement, we topped the record amount raised in 2013 with a staggering £280,000! This year's project is an even bigger challenge as we are focusing on 'Protecting migratory birds in the Eastern Mediterranean'. Millions of our birds are killed on both spring and autumn passage in countries such as Egypt and Lebanon.

Once again the demand for space to exhibit the ever-growing range of wildlife products has meant another increase in exhibitors, so visitors are assured of finding lots of new items among the 380 stands!

One of the main draws for visitors is the range of lectures covering every conceivable wildlife topic and this year is no exception! More than two hundred subjects will be covered in one or other of the four lecture theatres. The Authors Forum Marquee proved a great hit last year and new for 2015 is the Local Produce Marquee featuring local companies close to Rutland. With food in mind we welcome MPM catering. They bring a new look to Birdfair with a range of mobile units to cater for every taste. Don't miss the champagne bar near Optics!



Tim Appleton (LRWT)  
Birdfair Co-founder



Lorraine Eatenton (RSPB)  
Birdfair Co-organiser

Once again the list of celebrities supporting Birdfair reads like a prestigious wildlife's 'Who's Who'. The Friday night celebrity lecture features not one but three names – Chris Packham, Simon King and Nick Baker. By all accounts we are in for a night to remember!

On Saturday night Birdfair offers a new theme – a concert featuring world-renowned guitarists Craig Ogden and Gary Ryan with accordionist Milos Milivojevic. This is an evening not to be missed!

Over the weekend other celebrities include Bill Oddie, Mike Dilger, Martin Hughes-Games, Mark Carwardine, Iolo Williams, Ralph Steadman, Ceri Levi, Stephen Moss, David Lindo, Mark Avery, Johnny Kingdom, Jonathan and Angie Scott, Dominic Couzens and Miranda Krestovnikoff. Each and every one of our celebrities supports Birdfair and gives their time freely, so please, when passing, do shake their hands and thank them!

And don't forget Birdfair is held on one of Britain's top birding sites, so spare an hour or two over the weekend and enjoy some wonderful birdwatching, because it's what we all enjoy and why Birdfair is for this weekend the centre of the birding universe.

**Tim Appleton, Birdfair Co-founder**

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### How to contact us

Birdfair Office, Fishponds Cottage, Hambleton Road, Oakham, Rutland LE15 8AB

Tel: 01572 771079 Fax: 01572 756611 E-mail: [info@birdfair.org.uk](mailto:info@birdfair.org.uk)

Visit our website for the latest updates: [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk)

### Admission prices

One day e-ticket £13.50, on the gate £15. Children (under 16s) FREE. Three-day e-ticket £31.50, on the gate £35. Special price for RSPB and Wildlife Trust members on Sunday £11.50 e-ticket, £13.50 on the gate.

### Next year's Birdfair dates for your diary

19–21 August 2016

Please note that the opinions expressed by external contributors to the publication represent their own individual views and are not necessarily those of the RSPB or the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust.

Front cover illustration of white stork by Ian Lewington; photo of Tim Appleton by Martin Davies, photo of Lorraine Eatenton by RSPB.

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# Mighty oaks from little acorns grow

**Birdfair co-organiser Tim Appleton describes how Rutland Water continues to provide the ideal venue for pioneering conservation work.**

At the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT) we're no strangers to the great things that can come from small beginnings. Rutland Water Nature Reserve has evolved from its humble roots to one of Britain's favourite visitor attractions and we outgrew our very basic facilities years ago.

With this in mind we embarked on a journey that would lead us to something far more extraordinary. What began as an idea to build a hub for our team became an investment, in our current volunteers, and in the wildlife champions of the future.

In July our new Volunteer Training Centre officially opened its doors, our guests warmly welcomed by our patron, Sir David Attenborough.

Thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund, Anglian Water and many other amazing donors, we now have everything we need to train volunteers in conservation, countryside and heritage skills. With great facilities, the new building also sits perfectly in its wild surroundings and has a stunning view of the reserve.

Volunteers have been the focus of the project from start to finish; their ideas have shaped it and will continue to influence it. The centre will be at the very heart of the reserve's community; volunteers can work, learn and relax in comfort. We'll be launching a variety of activities designed to make a real difference to our natural heritage and promote skill sharing between people from all walks of life.

**To find out more visit [www.rutlandwater.org.uk](http://www.rutlandwater.org.uk)**



Tanji School's football team – who are called Osprey FC

## Osprey Project

This has been another great summer for the Osprey Project. In July the one hundredth chick to fledge from a nest in the Rutland Water area took to the air for the first time. Earlier in the spring the second World Osprey Week involved almost 250 schools from 12 different countries in an international celebration of osprey migration.

A key element of this year's WOW was an interactive map that allowed schools to follow the migration of satellite-tagged ospreys from Rutland, Scotland, Finland and the United States in real time.

You can view the map at [www.ospreys.org.uk/wow-interactive-schools-map](http://www.ospreys.org.uk/wow-interactive-schools-map). The map also shows the location of participating schools, enabling them to make links: an example is a project between Zespól Szkół in Poland and Gvanim Middle School in Israel. Regular Skype calls have enabled the students to develop friendships and to learn together.

Closer to home, children in Rutland were able to link up via Skype with youngsters in Gambia, Spain and Italy. It was exciting to see children at Tanji Lower Basic School in Gambia talking enthusiastically about their local ospreys – including our own 5F(12), who winters at the local marsh. Technology really does make the world a smaller place!

## How to get here

### By road

Travelling from the south/London: leave M25 at Junction 23, heading for A1(M) North. Stay on the A1 past Stamford flyover, then take the second turning off the A1 (at brown and white tourism sign to Rutland Water) onto the A606 towards Oakham; thereafter follow the yellow AA signposting to the Birdfair site, which is near Eggleton village at the west end of Rutland Water.

Travelling from the north: join the A1 and take the exit signposted to Oakham. Follow Oakham town centre signs and the AA signposting to the Birdfair.

### Be green – come by train

We are running a courtesy bus service – sponsored by *Bird Watching* magazine – between Birdfair and Oakham train station.

Please refer to our website – [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk) – for details of timings of the courtesy bus service and further information.





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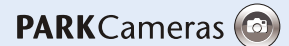
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**Artwork** – Ian Lewington for his beautiful artwork of white stork.

**Support staff and volunteers** – Joe Davis, Becky Corby, the Nature Reserve staff and their team of volunteers who prepare the reserve in the weeks beforehand and return it to its natural condition afterwards. A very special thank you to the Rutland Water volunteers, the RSPB local group volunteers and to our colleagues at the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT) and the RSPB.

**Tim Appleton (LRWT), Lorraine Eatenton (RSPB), Carole Allen and Tina Lindsay (Birdfair).**



# ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR



(\*most of it!)

## Bill Oddie remembers\*

For several years now it has been customary to refer to the Birdfair as the 'Ornithological Glastonbury', but it has not always been so. The very first one was more like a Boy Scout camp, and by no means a jamboree at that. That was in 1989, more than 25 years ago. So this year makes it the 27<sup>th</sup> Birdfair. Mind you, I have always been confused by figures, as anyone who has seen me stumbling over the scores when chairing Birdfair's quiz event, Bird Brain, will confirm. I am better at recalling eras and recognising – the politicians' favourite word – growth. The Birdfair is a perfect symbol thereof. It grew and grew and grew!

Every year, more and more people applied for stalls to display their wares (from

holidays to Borneo, to porcelain blue tits, and every piece of optical gear you have ever heard of, and quite a few you haven't). I could well imagine Birdfair organisers Tim Appleton and Martin Davies gazing at the flood of applications and having a *Jaws* moment: 'We're gonna need a bigger tent. Or several bigger tents. No, not tents, *marquees*.' Since then, the

marquees have been growing too. During the growing years, I spent many a Fair weekend wandering blindly round the maze of canvas canyons, rarely knowing where I was or where I wanted to go. When I couldn't even find my way to a quiet hide to escape to, I accepted that 'home' wasn't a bad choice.



Bill shares the stage with Stephen Moss and Tony Marr

Dan Thory

I suppose that was the era when the event qualified as a 'Trade Fair'. I wonder if they ever considered moving it into Earls Court or the NEC? I imagine Tim and Martin didn't want to lose the alfresco element, nor the incomparable bonus of being on the banks of one of Britain's finest nature reserves. I noticed that they also made an effort to introduce a less mercenary atmosphere by organising such events as a five-a-side football tournament, a two-hour bird race – won by the team from Rutland Water led by Tim Appleton (surprise flippin' surprise!) and –one of my



Bill and Tim Appleton





The Birdfair quiz, *Just a Linnet* featuring Bill, Stephen Moss, Tony Marr, the late Derek Moore, Chris Packham and the late Bob Scott

favourites – non-stop world music bands and dancers, adding sounds and colour from whichever country's birds were in the spotlight that year. I like to think that atmosphere was less Glastonbury than Woodstock or Womad.

My own profile has fluctuated somewhat. As I admitted, I spent the first few years lost and bemused, but I eventually got my confidence and my orders from Tim, and turned into the bloke who'd do more or less anything, no matter how humiliating. Few things were more demeaning than the Outdoor Clothing Fashion Show, where anyone with any title or image would mince down the cat-walk modelling waterproofs, doing quick changes, and vamping the audience, who duly wolf-whistled and barracked, whilst Tim did a sarcastic commentary. I don't recall why it was eventually dropped – something to do with dignity perhaps?

Unfortunately, about six years ago, I disgraced myself by frequent use of the 'f' and other words during Bird Brain, and also by referring to some endemic endangered Yellowthroat as 'another boring little bird that looks like any other Yellowthroat', and almost implying that BirdLife shouldn't bother to save it! These were in fact the outbursts of a bipolar in a manic phase. In a non-manic phase they were discussable points, perhaps, but this was not the time, place or language. I missed the following year. Or was I banished? Fair enough.

Happily, these days I dwell in a better place, and there are few better places to be than Rutland Water on Birdfair weekend. For my generation there is inevitable sadness at the passing of friends

who met up if only once a year. Thankfully, there are still plenty of us who do. Plus, there are new names, new faces, new holiday destinations and new artwork being created before your very eyes, by stars and newcomers. The Art Marquee has always been my favourite. It is very, very special – a joyous place.

Alas, I feel I must end with something very much less joyous. As the Fair has grown, the birds have diminished. Yes, we have gained guaranteed ospreys and kites but, let's face it, they got quite a helping hand. But what about the small migrants? Is it my rose-coloured memory that recalls the 'old days' with swallows and house martins on the telegraph wires in Eggleton, and plenty of sand martins flitting over the shallows in front of the main hide? For the last three years, I have seen very few. And here's a distressing irony: the theme of the very first Fair in 1989 was 'Stop The Massacre' (in particular, Malta); more than 25 years later, the theme is 'Protecting migratory birds in the Eastern Mediterranean' (Malta – plus several other blackspots in the Mediterranean).

Takes me back to Woodstock – Pete Seeger singing...

*'When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?'*

*'Where have all the flowers gone?' Pete Seeger, 1955*



**Don't miss Bill on Friday**  
(Authors Forum, 12:30, Events Marquee, 4:45),  
**RSPB Birders Lecture** (Lecture Marquee 1, 6:00),  
**chairing Bird Brain of Britain on Saturday** (Events Marquee, 3:00),  
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# Incredible journeys

House martins

Naturalist, author and TV-producer Stephen Moss describes why bird migration is such a miraculous delight

The wryneck looks back at me with that curious gaze, while above my head a flock of bee-eaters swoops for insects against the blue Israeli sky, uttering liquid contact calls. I catch a brief movement in one of the scrubby acacia trees: a Rüppell's warbler, together with an eastern Bonelli's, known here as a 'Balkan' warbler because of its south-east European destination. Then a splendid black-eared wheatear – known locally as 'Zorro' because of its black face-mask – hops boldly into view.

Where do I look next? A familiar refrain during my whistle-stop spring visit to southern Israel.

Along with my fellow-birders – Birdfair supremo Tim Appleton and the Urban Birder David Lindo – I'm here to take part in the 2014 Champions of the Flyway birdrace. Fortunately for both my sanity and my ability to identify what I'm seeing,

I've been here before: six times, in fact, including a filming trip back in 1999 with Bill Oddie and a camera crew. Yet every time I visit this part of the world, I marvel at the sheer numbers and variety of migrating birds: from herons and egrets, through buzzards and eagles, to warblers and wheatears. Indeed, of the 140 species we tally on our 24-hour

Wheatear

Tom Marshall (rspb-images.com)

birding marathon, at least half are migrants, passing through Israel on their way north to breed in Europe and Asia.

There are few events more exciting for the birder than being on a migration flyway at the height of the spring or autumn migration season. And while





I've enjoyed watching migrant birds at Cape May in New Jersey and Monterey in California, The Gambia in Africa and Queensland in Australia, there's something incredibly special about seeing our own familiar European birds in such large numbers.

Part of the excitement is that you never know what will happen next. One afternoon we were standing around outside our Eilat hotel when, looking up, we noticed a 'kettle' of birds: hundreds of steppe buzzards (the eastern race of our common buzzard) surging north from their winter quarters in sub-Saharan Africa.

Amongst them were a handful of larger birds: steppe eagles, together with white and black storks, all slowly drifting north on the warm air rising from the surrounding desert.

That evening we headed down to North Beach, where almost anything can turn up: I remember once seeing a flock of night herons coming in from the Red Sea, and on this occasion we were treated to a flypast from a score of glossy ibises. In the trees behind the beach, we found an unexpected songbird, a wood warbler, looking as if it would rather be in a Welsh oakwood than this urban jungle.

At the other end of the Western Palearctic, in Morocco, the sense that you are watching 'our' birds is even more acute, as this is directly on the flyway between West Africa and Britain. Spring here is both similar to and different from Israel and the Eastern Mediterranean: similar, in the numbers and variety of birds, but very different in terms of species.

In March, the constant procession of swallows, martins and swifts is a timely reminder that spring is just around the corner back home, while flocks of waders on the estuaries, marsh and Montagu's harriers flying northwards, and a redstart at a Sahara oasis are all reminders of the amazing journeys these birds take to reach their northern breeding grounds.

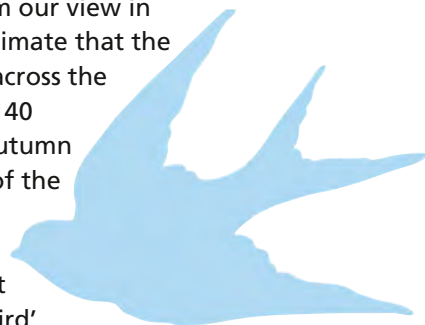
Wood warbler



As you can tell, I'm pretty enthusiastic about migration. That's why I feel so strongly about stopping the terrible slaughter that's taking place along these crucial flyways, especially those across and around the Mediterranean. What's happening in Malta gained deserved publicity last year thanks to my friends Chris Packham and Ruth Peacey and their brave colleagues, while Bill Oddie and the much-missed Derek Moore campaigned relentlessly against a comparable slaughter in Cyprus.

And, as US author Jonathan Franzen has witnessed, even worse is hidden from our view in Egypt. Local observers estimate that the nets stretching for miles across the desert will catch at least 140 million birds in a single autumn – roughly one in twenty of the migrants leaving Europe for Africa. As Franzen puts it: 'Egypt is the worst place to be a migratory bird'.

So as you wander around the Birdfair, meeting old friends and making new ones, trying out a new pair of binoculars or having a drink at the beer tent, spare a few moments to remember why we are all here. Join the fight to save our precious migrant birds from this needless slaughter – otherwise one spring they may not return to delight us with their sights and sounds.



Swallow

Chris Gomersall (rsqb-images.com)

Stephen Moss is a naturalist, author and TV-producer who's been coming to Birdfair for the past 25 years. His latest book, co-authored with Brett Westwood, is *Tweet of the Day*. Don't miss Stephen's appearances in the Events Marquee at 11:00 Saturday and at 1:00 Sunday.

Andy Hay (rsqb-images.com)





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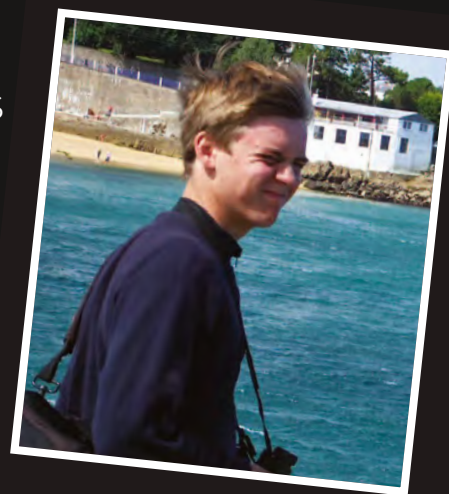




# A Next Generation take on Birdfair • By Jonnie Fisk

- The **Next Generation Birder** blog reveals a youthful view of last year's Birdfair.

**'There's a woman with wallcreeper earrings, a two-metre hen harrier made of insulation board and the tannoy is announcing a death's-head hawkmoth at the RSPB stand.' It can only be Birdfair!**



From Thursday night, Armely Lodge Farm became a hub of NGB tents as members arrived from over 15 counties. Two particularly exciting arrivals were 'Bardsey Ben' Porter (who turned 18 on the Sunday of Birdfair!), who spends most of his time taking amazing photographs of the wildlife of Bardsey Island, as well as jamming a few juicy self-finds (most recently citrine wagtail), and James O'Neill, a Northern Ireland resident who brought along the now-famous death's-head, which posed and squeaked perfectly.

We were at Birdfair in such numbers thanks mainly to both *British Birds* magazine and the RSPB, both of whom generously offered to form a partnership with us for the weekend. The RSPB had a NGB section of their stand, where existing NGB members met (often for the first time) and young birders from across the country – and beyond – came to sign up.



The number and variety of stands and marquees boggled my tiny birding brain. It was a cocktail of emotions in those tents, accentuated by the high humidity and scent of cut grass. I felt reassured after speaking to the Wildfowl &



**Meeting Hookpod was very exciting. These guys are the solution to seabird bycatch.**

Wetlands Trust, who are shining a light at the end of the spoon-billed sandpiper tunnel; I felt hopeless at the BirdLife Malta stall as I was told that shooting a honey buzzard is 'a right of passage'; and I felt a little starstruck meeting some of my favourite bird artists. Books were poured over, magazine subscriptions pondered, shiny new scopes peered through while migrant hawkers buzzed overhead.

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MARQUEE 4,  
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**New equipment** on show will include the 380g **Traveller BGA Mg Black**, **Explorer WA Oasis-C** and **Savanna R** binoculars plus the **IS 60 R** range of spottingscopes. We also plan to have examples of the **new DBA** available for close inspection.

This year we are offering a **guaranteed part exchange** for your current binocular or spotting scope with a promise to **donate** your p/x wherever suitable to **UK wildlife charities** for use in their education programmes. <sup>(1)</sup>

**Supporting Birdlife International.** Buying at Birdfair directly contributes to conservation. Together with **infocus**, we will **donate 10%** of all sales over the weekend to help protect migratory birds in the Eastern Mediterranean.

We look forward to seeing you.

(1) Terms and conditions apply. See a member of staff for more information.

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**Just a few of the NGBs who made it along to the Richard Crossley-led bird walk**

At 2 pm, a 30-strong gaggle of young birders were accumulating around the ringing tent. The reason? An organised bird walk 'n talk with Richard Crossley, the brain behind the Crossley ID Guides.

I hugely enjoyed the traditional Birdfair *Bird Brain of Britain* which was well attended and with a recurring theme of passenger pigeons (*I wonder why*) plus a lot of very interesting answers (did you know that stone-curlew last bred in The Netherlands in 1957? Or that the Madagascar serpent eagle mainly eats leaf-tailed geckos?).



**(From left) Killian Mullarney, Mark Constantine and Magnus Robb AKA The Sound Approach and RSPB chief executive Mike Clarke.**

Come 6 pm, the stalls might have shut but the day was far from over as the RSPB and The Sound Approach had combined forces for a superlecture! NGB members piled in and took up three rows of seating. An Englishman, an

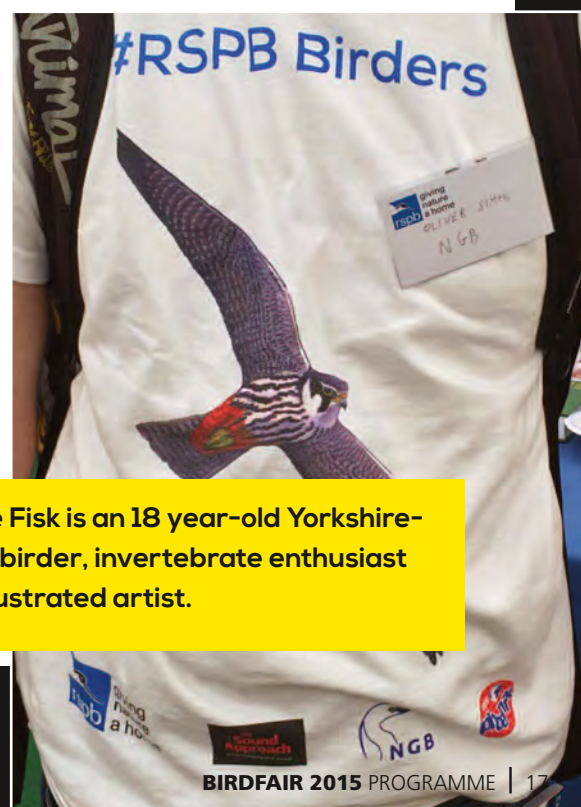
Irishman and a Scotsman sounds like the start of a joke, but it was a reality on stage as Lush Cosmetic's managing director Mark Constantine, Irish bird artist (and Liam Neeson impersonator) Killian Mullarney and bird sound recorder Magnus Robb took us through their *'Listening for Life'* talk. Our ears were treated to recordings of birds as unusual as the Andalusian hemipode, Zino's petrel and the recently discovered Omani owl.



**Mural for Birdfair 2014. The theme: Save our seas**

But for me, it was the warmth that the three exuded to their fellow birders that made me feel like I was in the best club on earth.

And the best thing about being a birder? You don't have to sit about waiting until next year's Birdfair!



**Jonnie Fisk is an 18 year-old Yorkshire-based birder, invertebrate enthusiast and frustrated artist.**

Find out more about New Generation Birders – see their blog at <http://nextgenerationbirders.blogspot.co.uk/>

Photos: RSPB

BIRDFAIR 2015 PROGRAMME | 17





# Love Chats?

COME & TALK TO US ABOUT OUR BIRDWATCHING EXPERIENCES

Australia's Northern Territory is paradise for birds and birdwatchers alike. This year at Birdfair we have experts from both our tropical Top End and the deserts of the Red Centre. Come and chat to us in Marquee 3 and find out why the NT should be on your list. Whether you're after endemics, variety of species, numbers within them or rare species, the Northern Territory can deliver. Check out our website for itinerary ideas and our top birding spots.



Gouldian Finch / *Erythrura gouldiae*

## NT BIRD SEASON

AUGUST-OCTOBER

Birding is great year round in Australia's Outback, but species concentrate from August through mid-October throughout the NT. As wetlands shrink towards the end of September, migratory species can be found throughout the Top End in Kakadu, Katherine and Arnhem Land. Check our birding calendar for more details of bird counts, trails and events throughout the NT.

**Contact:** [www.australiasoutback.co.uk/birdwatching](http://www.australiasoutback.co.uk/birdwatching)

Photo: Tourism NT/Mick Jerram



Great Bowerbird / *Chlamydera nuchalis*

## KAKADU BIRD WEEK

14-21 OCTOBER 2015

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**Contact:** [www.australiasoutback.co.uk/birdwatching](http://www.australiasoutback.co.uk/birdwatching)

Photo: Tourism NT/Luke Paterson

**BIRDFAIR 2015 - MARQUEE 3**  
RUTLAND, 21-23 AUGUST 2015



Yellow Chat  
*Epthianura crocea*

Photo: Tourism NT/Luke Paterson



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**MICK JERRAM**  
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**MARK CARTER**  
BIRDING AND WILDLIFE

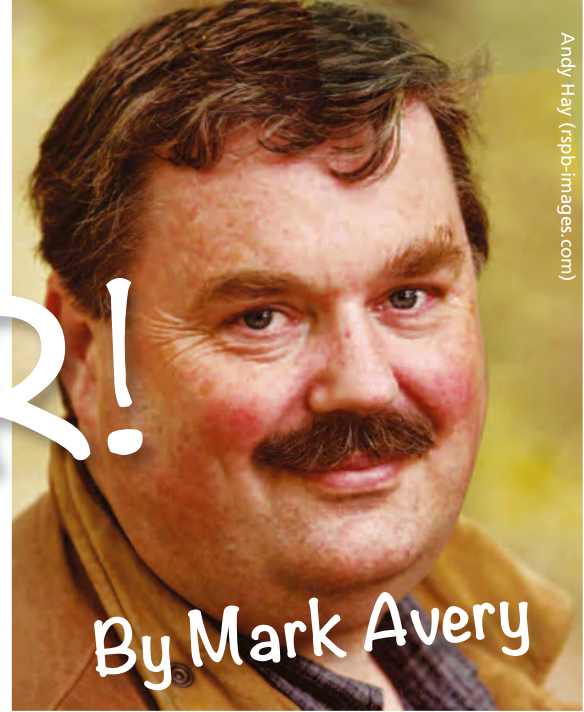
Mark is a Scottish-Australian zoologist and guide resident in Alice Springs, NT. An expert birder, a skilled tracker and bioacoustics pioneer, Mark works on arid-zone species from across the animal kingdom from rare Parrots to Land Snails, via Bats and Bilbies. He provides specialist birding and wildlife guiding services in Central Australia and beyond.

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# Ten things not to miss at the BIRDFAIR!

If you've not been to the Birdfair before, then you're in for a treat, but even the most experienced of attendees can sometimes leave feeling that they missed out on something, so here's a checklist to help you get the most from your visit.



By Mark Avery

1



## Don't miss that talk!

There are so many talks at the Birdfair, on such a range of topics and by such a range of people, that it would be possible to spend all your visit in a marquee being entertained by them. Don't do that! But do plan your day so that you remember to go to those couple of talks that you really want to hear. There is no Birdfair iplayer to view at your leisure!

2



## The bird-ringing demonstration

Birds are caught, measured, ringed and released at the Birdfair as part of ongoing studies. This is a great opportunity to see common birds up close and to talk to the ringers about what they are doing.

3

## Birds!

You are at a nature reserve and there is nature all around you. Look out for ospreys flying over, waders on the shore and terns out in the centre of the lake. Remember to look up now and again, and remember to bring your binoculars.



4



## Beer!

The local beers at the Birdfair are a good accompaniment to your lunch with friends.



5

## The NGOs

You'll find a wide range of NGOs at the Birdfair from the Wildlife Trusts and the RSPB to Buglife and Butterfly Conservation. This is your opportunity to talk to them about what they are doing with your subscription and how they see the world. Tell them they are doing a great job if you think they are (they mostly are) but why not use the opportunity politely to get that complaint or query off your chest too.



6



## Get your book signed by your favourite author!

The Birdfair is a good place to buy books on birds, and natural history generally – often at a tempting discount. And your favourite author may be there to sign your purchase and have a chat with you (*hint!*)

7



Newton Maxwell Harris

8



Newton Maxwell Harris

## The Birdfair mural

Outside the Art Marquee, the Birdfair mural is being painted by a range of great artists during the course of the Birdfair. Each time you pass by it will have changed and grown as a new brush stroke is added. Take a few minutes to marvel at the skill – and talk to the artists (they won't mind, honestly!).

## Arrange to meet your friends

It is perfectly possible to spend all three days at the Birdfair and not come across your best friend who is there for three days too. A plan to meet up in a particular place at a particular time is a good idea (see point 4).

10

## Come back – tomorrow!

Remember to come back tomorrow – you didn't see it all did you? And if you came on Sunday only, and are now kicking yourself for not seeing all you wanted to see, write a note in your diary to come for at least two days next year! (Dates for Birdfair 2016 are 19–21 August.) See you!

9

## Bird Brain of Britain

A light-hearted but keenly fought 'Mastermind-style' quiz. Many years ago I won it and now I delight in watching others battle it out. Sit in the audience, cheer the winner, and then tell everyone you knew all the answers!



**Dr Mark Avery** is a blogger ([www.markavery.info/blog](http://www.markavery.info/blog)) and author who has two new books out in time for this year's Birdfair (*Behind the Binoculars* (with Keith Betton), a series of interviews with famous birders from Chris Packham to Lee Evans, and the late Phil Hollom to Robert Gillmor, and *Inglorious – conflict in the uplands*, which argues why we should ban driven grouse shooting).

Don't miss Mark's entertaining and thought-provoking talks on Friday at 2:30 in the Authors Forum, and on Saturday at 1:00 Lecture Marquee 3; 1:30 and 4:30 both in the Authors Forum.

## And don't forget ...

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## Birdfair Projects Updates: 2013 and 2014

Martin Fowlie, Communications Officer at BirdLife International, reports good progress in the last two conservation projects supported by Birdfair.

King penguins

# 2014: Protecting the oceans

The oceans cover 70% of the Earth's surface yet conservation action for the marine environment lags far behind effort on land. Globally, only 2.8% of the oceans have any form of legal

protection, compared with 12.9% of the world's land surface. The proceeds from the 2014 Birdfair are helping BirdLife International change this worrying statistic.

The main focus of the work has been the designation of new Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), ensuring that they cover critical at-sea habitats for seabirds and other marine wildlife. This work is vital if nations around the world are to stand any chance of meeting the Convention on Biological Diversity's target of protecting 10% of marine and coastal areas by 2020. Threats from oil pollution, fisheries, offshore renewable energy, plastics, ocean acidification and climate change mean that many marine species, including sharks, turtles, whales and seabirds, are globally threatened. These sites will protect critical breeding and feeding areas, migratory stop-off points and key sites used during non-breeding periods. The protection of an adequate network of sites across species' ranges and throughout the year will reduce the impact of many threats faced by seabirds, which will ultimately help improve their conservation status.

We've already achieved a lot in the first year of the project. At the 12th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity last October, we got the formal recognition of over 600 marine Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) as Ecologically or Biologically Significant marine Areas (EBSAs) in need of



Snow petrel – an exclusively Antarctic species

Both photos by James Lowen

protection. One of the first jobs of the project was to complete the marine Important Bird and Biodiversity Area inventory for Antarctica. This has now been done and involved combining the tracking data of several species of penguin with those of other seabirds to identify the most crucial areas for these birds. BirdLife has also been working with Whale and Dolphin Conservation to identify multi-taxa hotspots – meaning those areas that are important to birds and other animals such as cetaceans.



# GET CLOSE TO NATURE THIS SUMMER

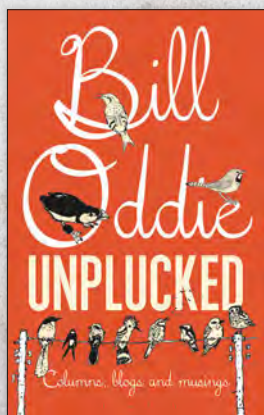


**Ceri Levy and Ralph Steadman**  
11am • Main Stage

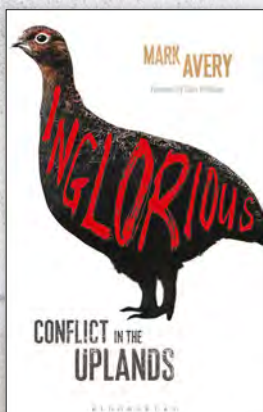


**David Lindo**  
11.30am • Authors Forum

Friday 21st  
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Birdfair!



**Bill Oddie**  
4.45pm • Main Stage



**Mark Avery**  
2.30pm • Authors Forum

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Resident species like chestnut-capped blackbirds also rely on the continent's grasslands

# 2013: Prairies to Pampas

In 2013, the Birdfair project focus was on the Americas Flyaway – from the prairies to the pampas. On this flyway, populations of grassland birds are declining rapidly, primarily

due to the loss of native grasslands through agricultural intensification, energy developments, afforestation, overgrazing, too frequent burning and fire suppression.

Fortunately, many declining grassland bird species can co-exist with bird-friendly grassland management practices. Among these species are a number of long-distance migrants whose conservation is dependent on the effective management of grasslands throughout the Americas. In Argentina, activities are focusing on raising local awareness of the conservation issues of the bobolink amongst local rice producers, and looking for production alternatives linking the conservation of the species and rice production. Building these relationships and collaborations with local rice producers has resulted in Aves Argentinas (BirdLife in Argentina) being invited to participate on the agricultural good practices for the sustainable management of rice farming project.

The protection of seasonally flooded grasslands at the Barba Azul Reserve is the focus in Bolivia, along with population monitoring of buff-breasted sandpipers. Educational programmes are being conducted in order to provide information on neo-tropical migrants and threatened species to local schools and authorities.

In Colombia, we are identifying potential Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) for the protection of buff-breasted sandpipers. Five potential IBAs have been identified, and another two sites are being considered as potential IBAs.

Support from the 2013 Birdfair is being used to develop techniques and approaches to grassland conservation at key sites and for flagship grassland-dependent migratory species across the Americas. It is also helping to build links between sites in Latin America and sites in North America, ensuring that birds have safe havens all along their migratory journey. A great example of joined-up conservation!

Find out more about BirdLife International's work at their stand in Marquee 5. [www.birdlife.org](http://www.birdlife.org)

Andy and Gill Swash

The cock-tailed tyrant is dependent on lowland grassland



Anibal Parera

Bird-friendly beef ranching is helping migratory species



Just by coming to the Birdfair you are actively helping to support bird conservation. Each year we raise money for a vital BirdLife International project.

Freelance journalist James Lowen introduces this year's project – Protecting migratory birds in the Eastern Mediterranean – and describes some innovative solutions to a horrifying problem.



# Flying the gauntlet

**T**his year's Birdfair is raising funds to tackle the illegal killing of birds in the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly Egypt and Lebanon. For those who get off on killing things, the photograph is presumably excitement itself. But for those who prefer their birdlife, well, alive, the image circulating on social media is unequivocally shocking. Beaming towards the camera, four men – an entire arsenal slung casually over shoulders – proudly display the day's feathered haul: the corpses of 30 white storks. Thirty. In another image, a five-year-old boy clasps a young black-crowned night-heron in his right hand. The bird is dead. With his left arm, the boy just about steadies a rifle that dwarfs him. The boy is smiling. Welcome to life – and death – in the Eastern Mediterranean.

This autumn many millions of migratory birds will cross the Mediterranean Sea from Europe to Africa, heading to wintering quarters further south. As you read this, their post-breeding movements will already have started – as will their massacre. The Africa–Eurasia flyway is used by some 25 globally threatened species. Their number includes such charismatic birds as sociable lapwing and northern bald ibis. Eastern imperial and greater spotted eagles, plus popular species such as red-footed falcon and pallid harrier, are among 37 species of 'migratory soaring birds' (raptors, storks, pelicans) using the Rift Valley–Red Sea flyway. In terms of absolute numbers of soaring migrants, this thoroughfare between two continents is the second most important route in the world.

Populations of one-third of the 188 migrant passerine species using the flyway are in freefall. Species such as European roller and red-backed shrike, European turtle dove and Eurasian cuckoo all fly the gauntlet of the Eastern Mediterranean's killing fields.

Being launched at this year's Birdfair, a recent BirdLife International assessment of illegal killing of birds in the Mediterranean estimates that more than 25 million individual birds may be illegally killed here each year. In Cyprus, Egypt and Lebanon the annual death toll is thought to exceed two million birds. In the Middle East overall, says Ibrahim Khader (Regional Director, BirdLife International Middle East Division), 'illegal killing has been and continues to be the single most significant direct threat to bird species'.



## **Illegal killing has been and continues to be the single most significant direct threat to bird species**

The BirdLife analysis demonstrates that each of the top five culprit nations has a particularly notorious 'black spot': an area where more than 400,000 birds are killed every year. At least three species – turtle dove, Eurasian chaffinch and blackcap – lose more than one million individuals birds to such killing each year. Since the turn of the century, 'Turtle dove populations have declined by 30% overall,' says Richard Grimmett (BirdLife International's Director of Conservation), 'yet still one million are killed illegally each year – and that's in addition to the legal take with hunting of this species permitted in many countries in the autumn.'

The Eastern Mediterranean is one enormous blackspot for two chief reasons: geography and culture. The combined lie of land and sea restricts many bird species to a narrow migration corridor. Other species need to rest and feed prior to, or after, crossing the Sahara Desert or Mediterranean Sea: birds concentrate at 'bottleneck' sites or oases and other vegetated locations. Migrants may be shot, trapped in mist-nets or cages, or enticed to perch on lured sticks. They are lured by decoys, by playback of voice-recordings and by bright lights projecting into the darkness of night.

As for culture, the Eastern Mediterranean has a long tradition of hunting birds – stretching back to the Pharaohs in the case of Egypt. 'Bird-hunting,' says Assad Serhal (Director General, Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon; SPNL, BirdLife in Lebanon), 'is socially accepted in our country', as it is in others across the region. Serhal reckons there may be as many as half-a-million active hunters in Lebanon: one-ninth of the population. With so many hunters among the electorate, it would seemingly take a politician as rare as a northern bald ibis to make a stand against the practice. In the region, birds are hunted for food, fun and finance. 'In Lebanon,' says Serhal, 'passerines are mainly targeted for sale to restaurants or for personal consumption.'

### **Common quails are a delicacy, golden orioles are avian Viagra**

'In Egypt,' says Noor Noor, Executive Coordinator of Nature Conservation Egypt (NCE, BirdLife Affiliate in Egypt), 'Common quails are viewed as a delicacy.' Thanks to high market demand, quail-hunters earn well above the average annual income. Golden orioles are prized due to a belief that they represent a natural avian alternative to Viagra. Falcon-trapping is an even more lucrative business, with saker falcons reportedly being sold for US\$5,000 or more.

Lebanese hunters even travel elsewhere in the region to pursue their hobby. The scale of illegal bird killing in the Eastern Mediterranean, in terms of both extent and the size of the collective hunters' bag, is bad enough. But what truly terrifies is that, in some countries, the problem is

intensifying. In Egypt, mist-nets have only recently become a prominent feature of bird-trapping, yet are now on widespread sale. In 2012, a German television crew discovered mist-nets erected in a near-continuous barrier lining 700 km of Egypt's northern coast. Let's reflect on that for a moment. Seven hundred kilometres is more than the distance that separates London from Edinburgh. That's about 78,000 nine-metre-long mist-nets in a single line. From the perspective of a quail, oriole or dove, that's one heck of a deadly blockade.



Paul Chesterfield (rspb-images.com)

The blackcap is a familiar summer visitor and a much-loved garden songster – more than a million are killed every year in the eastern Mediterranean.

### **Mist nets**



Walter Albany



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Birds that failed to 'fly the gauntlet'

### Law enforcement has suffered from political instability

There are other reasons for hunting getting worse. In Egypt, law enforcement has suffered from the political instability that has smothered the country in recent years: arms are more widely available; desert travel is now by vehicle rather than camel, so even remote oases have become accessible to hunters; MP3 players and inexpensive speakers have made playback of bird calls commonplace and cost-effective. And, as those images of white storks and the black-crowned night-heron demonstrate, social media is both facilitating information exchange and exacerbating one-upmanship ('my catch is bigger than yours').

### The prospects for many species of migratory birds look catastrophic

In brief, the prospects for many species of migratory birds look catastrophic. But are they? This is where the BirdLife International Partnership – and Birdfair 2015 – come in. The findings from BirdLife International's recent evaluation provides clear evidence that illegal killing in the Eastern Mediterranean 'is at a scale where we cannot stand back and let it continue,' stresses Richard Grimmett. 'The killing is undermining conservation efforts taken in northern and central Europe and in countries along the Africa-Eurasia flyway of which the Eastern Mediterranean is part.'

BirdLife is on the case. This year the Birdfair is raising funds for a project to tackle illegal hunting, co-ordinated by BirdLife International's Middle East Division and implemented in their respective countries by SPNL and NCE. Part of a wider initiative on Migratory Soaring Birds and integrated into BirdLife's Regional Flyway Facility, the project seeks to reduce significantly the scale and impact of illegal and indiscriminate killing of migratory birds in the Eastern Mediterranean.

### Readers may find such pragmatism unpalatable

The focus on illegal and indiscriminate killing is significant. BirdLife International is not seeking an end to all hunting of migratory birds. Such an absolute goal would doom the project to failure. It is better, the thinking goes, to be realistic. Readers in some European and North American countries – such as the UK, host of the Birdfair – may find such pragmatism unpalatable, but Grimmett reminds us that bird-hunting is also a longstanding feature of Britain's heritage. 'Britons used to catch hundreds of thousands of larks, pipits and finches for sale in markets.' In the Eastern Mediterranean, Grimmett continues, 'we have to accept that hunting is a strongly established and popular practice of economic and cultural significance – and focus instead on advancing a commitment to responsible and legal hunting.'

### BirdLife International, SPNL and NCE are collaborating with public authorities and the hunting sector

The principal conservation outcomes desired are the reduced killing of protected species, particularly migratory soaring birds such as white stork (the figurehead of this year's Birdfair), and improved protection and law enforcement. In both Egypt and Lebanon, the problem is not a lack of legislation but its enforcement. Existing laws ban certain trapping devices and methods of killing, set strict seasons for hunting, and prohibit the killing of birds in reserves and of protected species anywhere. 'An adequate legislative framework is essential', says Ibrahim Khader, 'but without enforcement, it has limited impact.' In both countries, the problem is one of woeful enforcement capacity. In Lebanon, Assad Serhal explains, 'hunting has been banned for 20 years, but those charged with enforcement have insufficient staff to deal with such a huge problem.'

### BirdLife has played a key part in establishing a new Action Plan

These twin alliances are already paying dividends. In Egypt, under the aegis of the Convention on Migratory Species, BirdLife has played a key part in establishing a new Action Plan to address the killing of migratory birds. Agreed in March 2014, the Plan includes the need for strengthened law enforcement, education and awareness, a socio-economic study, and field monitoring.

The Egyptian Environmental Affairs agency has decided to establish a hunting unit to address the issue. The Agency is working closely with NCE, which is leading on awareness and monitoring, as well as working with the managers of protected areas to enforce hunting laws. In Lebanon, SPNL has secured parliamentary approval for a new hunting law and enabling regulations. SPNL has complemented this with an approach that Assad Serhal terms 'responsible hunting', where 'hunters become responsible for the



sustainability of the game species and bag limits, respect non-game species and hunting seasons, and help protect their habitats’.

### **Responsible Hunting Areas – the way forward?**

Making this happen has required three decades of discussion, education and collaboration with key hunting representatives. ‘Responsible hunters are finally differentiating themselves from “shooters”, and have declared themselves willing to work with SPNL to deliver a more sustainable approach to hunting,’ says Serhal. These are not empty words. Hunting bodies, SPNL, municipal authorities and local communities have collectively identified a series of pilot ‘Responsible Hunting Areas’ (RHAs) across Lebanon. On 2 April this year, eight municipalities signed a declaration on responsible hunting and defined RHA boundaries.

### **Direct economic benefit**

There is direct economic benefit to participating communities through new job opportunities as guards and guides. Hunters, meanwhile, see RHAs as ‘a practical way for their hobby to become legal – and sustainable,’ says Serhal. With such a caucus of support, Serhal anticipates the model snowballing across the country. ‘Other communities are already expressing interest,’ he enthuses. Purists might consider that collaborating with hunters is akin to conservationists entering into a Faustian pact. Ibrahim Khader disagrees. ‘Working with responsible hunters, rather than fighting them, is the way to advance conservation in the region,’ he says. Khader sees strengthening regional and national alliances with responsible hunters as a key tool to change behaviour – and thereby save migratory birds. Khader also sets BirdLife

sights higher, setting an aspiration for the project ‘to secure high-level political support to address illegal killing at national and regional levels.’ This might even involve a formal Declaration by the Arab Council of Environment Ministers. Such an agreement would constitute a monumental step forward for the region as a whole. The conservation of migratory birds requires joined-up action in, and between, states along the flyway.

In this context, as in many others, the advantages of BirdLife International’s global Partnership are plain. Equally evident is the contribution that Birdfair funding can make to efforts to halt illegal killing in the Mediterranean. ‘Birdfair funding is significant in its own right,’ Richard Grimmett explains, ‘but it is also critical to help BirdLife leverage other donors, notably the Global Environment Facility.’ Large funding bodies often put up major grants only if the recipient has secured money from other sources. The Global Environment Facility is willing to finance a second phase of the Migratory Soaring Birds project and jointly finance the Regional Flyway Facility – provided BirdLife secures co-financing. This is where the Birdfair comes in.

### **‘Our aim is that responsible hunters become the guardians of bird species and their habitats.’**

Those with long memories may recall that the Birdfair has form on hunting in the Mediterranean. It is just over 25 years since the Birdfair’s first-ever project supported a campaign against illegal hunting in Malta. Although birds are still commonly shot in Malta and a referendum to ban spring hunting narrowly failed in March 2015, the overall situation is now one or even two orders of magnitude worse in both Egypt and Lebanon. But not for much longer if the BirdLife Partnership gets its way. According to Assad Serhal, SPNL aspires to ‘Responsible Hunting Areas becoming fully operational’ in Lebanon by 2020. ‘Our aim is that responsible hunters become the guardians of bird species and their habitats.’ Richard Grimmett’s vision is that, by 2020, ‘legislation will be enforced, no hunting will occur within protected areas, and shifting public attitudes force an end to widespread illegal and indiscriminate hunting.’ It won’t be easy, but those sickening images of white storks will eventually become a thing of the past. ‘BirdLife has to play a long game with illegal bird killing,’ concludes Grimmett, ‘but we are confident that things will change.’



**Find out how you can provide a safer journey for turtle doves, white storks and other migratory birds by visiting [www.birdlife.org/save-migratory-birds](http://www.birdlife.org/save-migratory-birds) or come and talk to the BirdLife International team in Marquee 5.**

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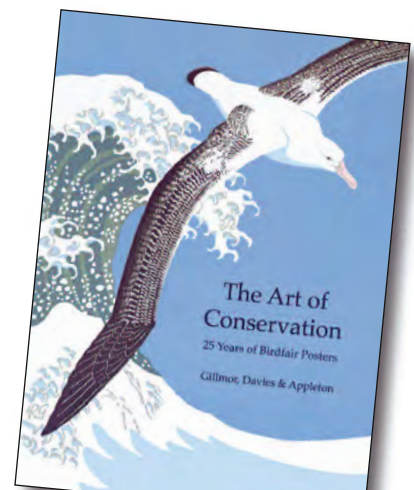


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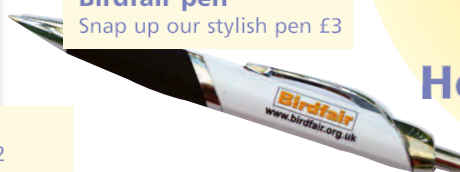
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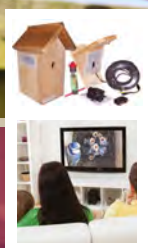
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**Key:** AM = Art Marquee,  
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## Books plus ...

The usual wide range of books, both new and old, will be available. Be sure to look out for **Bloomsbury (M6/41)** which has: *Inglorious* by Mark Avery; *The Complete Naturalist* by Nick Baker; *In Pursuit of Butterflies* by Matthew Oates; *Nextinction* by Ralph Steadman.

Also find out about the enhanced guides, now available for Android phones and tablets by using the Bloomsbury Bird Guides app. **WILD Sounds & Books (M3/49-53)** will have their usual selection of publications, and will be co-launching the *Collins BTO Guide to Rare British Birds* by Paul Sterry and Paul Standcliffe. Get a special discount voucher by email from wildsounds.com. Sound Approach has its new *Undiscovered Owls* title available. Visit the **Birdwatch (M2/97-100)** for a new subscription offer with a free gift, plus best-priced bird books and discounts on BirdGuides services. **British Birds (M3/24-25)** will be launching its new digital magazine, with a live demonstration – see the Bird Photographer of the Year images and meet the editor. **Bird Journal (M5/39)** will be showcasing its new desktop software available for Mac or online.

## Art etc ...

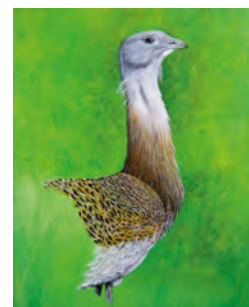
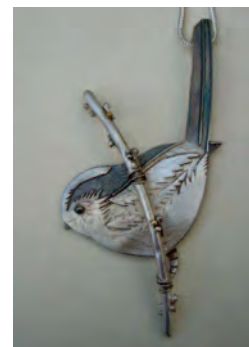
The Art Marquee is a favourite of many, crammed full of the most amazing paintings, prints, sculptures and jewellery. **Chris Rose (AM/34)** will exhibit original work from the forthcoming *Robins & Chats of the World* guide with 62 plates and the front cover all available and **Ernest Leahy (AM/35)** exhibits his latest watercolour studies from the UK, Europe and the Americas. **Carry Akroyd (AM/39)** will have illustrations from the Bird of the Month column in *The Oldie* while **Event Gallery**

**Fine Art (M5/8-9)** will feature work from British wildlife artist, Kay Johns, and big cat artist, Carl Brenders, with many new works. **Roy Aplin (AM/22)** has a new great bustard study on display while **John Palmer Fine Art (AM/14)** will have many new original animal and bird paintings available. **Smart Images Wildlife Photography (M6/35)** have new prints on aluminium board, plus a king penguin jigsaw puzzle, and **Jo Ruth (AM/31)** features the use of stencils and spray paint to produce fascinating work from bickering jays to retiring bullfinches. **Anna de Ville (AM/11)** has a gorgeous new limited edition long-tailed tit pendant and some moth-inspired items.

## Time away ...

The Birdfair offers exciting opportunities to find a birding break to virtually every corner of the world. **Rockjumper Birding Tours (M2/24-25)** has a wide range of new tours from Antarctica to Taiwan, including Paraguay, Pacific Islands, Papua New Guinea and Puerto Rico. **Wildlife Worldwide/Travelling Naturalist (M6/25-27)** has added birding to Zambia and Armenia, and **Bed & Birding (M1/34)** offers Belarus and Ukraine to far away places like Peru and Papua New Guinea. **Wildfoot Travel** (formerly Antarctic Bound) (M2/1) now goes to Africa and South America, **Speyside Wildlife (M7/21-22)** offers Kamchatka and Panama for birds, Uganda for gorillas and India for snow leopard, while **Birdquest and Wild Images (M6/3-4)** has many new destinations, including Chad, Mali, West Papua and Papua New Guinea.

If South America is your choice then **Birdfinders (M2/20-21)** has new tours to Belize, Ecuador and Senegal, or try **Trogon Tours (M2/74)** to Peru, with Paraguay and Uruguay coming soon! Visit **Quito Turismo (M5/29)** and find out about the 132 species of hummingbirds in Ecuador, almost half of the world's species. **Bellavista Cloud Forest Lodge**



(From top) Ernest Leahy will be exhibiting his latest watercolours; WILD Sounds & Books will be co-launching the *Collins BTO Guide to Rare British Birds*; Anna de Ville has a new long-tailed tit pendant; Chris Rose will exhibit work from *Robins & Chats of the World*; Fine Art will feature work by Kay Johns; Roy Aplin will display a great bustard study; Bellavista Cloud Forest offers mammals such as the olinguito.





(From top) Batumi Birding offers the chance to visit Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan; Hawke Optics will present several new models including the Endurance ED; Viking has a new compact AIS monocular; Birding Africa has a new Ethiopian endemics tour; Out of the Woodwork offers some inspired new bird boxes; The British Arachnological Society will feature live British spiders; Wildwatch Spain has new hides for Iberian lynx.

(M7/37) offers not just an abundance of birds but also unusual mammals like the olinguito and the tayra or giant weasel. **Serra dos Tucanos (M5/35)** has a new lodge in Brazil, with exciting new trails and bird tours, and **Costa Rica Birding (M7/55)** will be highlighting the new official Costa Rica Birdwatching Route.

Why not try an exotic European tour?

**Batumi Birding (M5/5)** offers the chance to visit Georgia, as well as opportunities for tours to Armenia and Azerbaijan.

**Birds and Nature Tours Portugal (M5/17)** has a new Birds and Conservation programme that includes actual conservation activities and **Aragon Tourist Department (M2/94)** will tell you all about the exciting montane species that can be found in the north of Spain. **Ron McCombe Wildlife Photography (M6/29)** has new golden eagle photographs on display and a chance to join a workshop in Sweden. **Wildwatch Spain (M1/22)** has new hides for Iberian lynx and opportunities for observing wolves and bears, while **Europe's Big 5 (M7/30)** offers opportunities to observe bear, wolf, lynx, wolverine and bison in Europe. Closer to home **Orcadian Wildlife (M2/68)** will be featuring a pair of white-tailed eagles on Hoy, and also, for the green birder, has a new electric car for hire.

African and Asian birds are hard to beat. Visit the **Uganda Tourism Board (M8/23–32)** and discover their efforts to save the endangered Fox's weaver.

**Birding Africa (M3/29)** has a new Ethiopian endemics tour with excellent chances of Ethiopia wolf and gelada baboon, and **Tribes (M3/15–16)** has new opportunities for visiting Botswana.

**Escape to India (M3/30)** offers tracking tigers by Jeep, wild dogs and leopards by elephant, as well as canoeing for kingfishers.

## Optical offerings ...

Optics are essential for any birdwatcher and there is no better place than the Birdfair to find all of the best, all together for easy comparison. **Swarovski Optik (OD/16)** will reveal its new Field Pro Package, which complements its EL products to give greater viewing comfort. **Hawke Optics (M5/24–27)** will have its new Endurance ED range, new Frontier ED models and the Sapphire double ED spotting scope. **Leica (OM/8)** has its new compact, bright and sharp Ultravid 32 HD-Plus binoculars available in both 8x and 10x while **Vortex (M1/1–2)** will show its newly designed Crossfire binoculars. **Zeiss (OM/4)** has its Victory SF

8x42 and 10x42 binoculars, and the new 8x32 and 10x32 Terra binoculars.

**Opticron (OD/9)** will have its lightweight Traveller BGA, the Savanna R and an updated Explorer WA Oasis. **Vanguard (OD/13)** has a new tripod and head with smooth panning action and **Viking (OM/7)** has a new compact AIS monocular with built-in electronic stabilisation. **Canon (M4/7–9)** has its acclaimed new EOS 7D Mark II and the EF 100–400mm f/4.5–5.6 L series zoom lens.

## Organisations ...

Most birders are interested in more than just birds, and several organisations reflect this wider enthusiasm. **The British Arachnological Society (M8/7–8)** will feature live British spiders including the fen raft spider, and **ORCA (M5/22)** will be displaying cetacean sightings from around the UK. Among UK bird organisations, the **BTO (M3/36–38)** will be launching the new *Collins BTO Guide to Rare British Birds* and Chris Packham will also be launching a new international photography competition on Saturday afternoon. **The RSPB (M2/33–37)** will have exciting soapbox talks taking place throughout the fair, giving insight into many of their critical conservation projects. Visit the **OSME (M5/6)** stand and hear about the new updated Arabic version of *Birds of the Middle East*. **The African Bird Club (M2/65–66)** will feature its collaboration with the Wildfowl & Wetland Trust to conserve the Madagascar pochard, and **BirdLife Cyprus (M1/24)** will be promoting Cyprus as a great birding destination despite the bird trapping.

## Miscellany ...

**Out of the Woodwork (OD/10)** has some inspired new bird boxes as well as pieces of outdoor art to make your garden truly unique.

**Brinvale Bird Foods (M7/20,45)** has two new 'no mess' mixes plus several new feeders and nestboxes. The new **Páramo (M2/69–71)** Poncho is quick and easy to use, ideal for wildlife watchers or photographers. Also see the Ladies' Suswa Shirt and the Men's Malabar Trousers. **Country Innovation (M6/5–9)** will have its new Linnet range of jackets on show as well as special offers from Berghaus footwear.

Find details of exhibitors in the directories and site plan on pages 64–79 and don't miss the Auction on pages 62 and 63 – you might pick up a real bargain!



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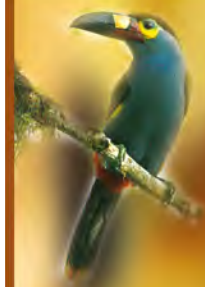
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# What's on

## Birdfair complete listings guide

Once again we've put together a fantastic programme of activities, events and talks that will fire up your enthusiasm for birds and wildlife. Scan through these pages to plan your visit to make sure you don't miss out on your favourites!

Book a birding tour of Rutland Water on the Rutland Belle, learn about the countries and the wildlife you've always promised yourself to see, and find out about the latest discoveries and birding equipment! Marvel at the artwork, photos and new books – find the perfect birthday or Christmas present! And don't forget to stock up on bird food and feeders before you leave! There really is fun for all the family – good food, music and that indefinable Birdfair atmosphere, the hum of good humour, fills the air. Meet your favourite authors, artists and TV wildlife presenters, including Chris Packham, Simon King, Iolo Williams, Mike Dilger, Martin Hughes-Games, Johnny Kingdom, Stephen Moss, Nick Baker, David Lindo, Bill Oddie, and Jonathan and Angie Scott. In fact, there's so much to do and see, why not buy a three-day ticket?

*Please note that all the events, lectures, auction lots listed are correct at time of going to print. There may be unavoidable changes. Please visit our website in the run-up to the fair which will be constantly updated.*



Photos: Newton Maxwell-Harris/The Creative Mix

# What's on Friday 21 August

## All Weekend Events

### Rutland Water Nature Reserves

Don't forget that once you've paid for your entrance to the Birdfair you also have access to the Rutland Water Nature Reserves on the day of your ticket. Make time to go birding and explore Egleton and Lyndon Nature Reserves. On 5 February 2015, Rutland Water Nature Reserve was announced as 'Britain's Favourite Nature Reserve' in the *Landlove* Magazine awards! More than 25,000 votes were cast from their readers, who took the time to 'vote to help celebrate the very best things about the British countryside and reward the people who stand out to make it so wonderful'. The team here at Rutland Water are thrilled to receive the award, made extra special by the fact that the public decided the winners.

### Birdfair Auction

Every year the Auction Marquee is packed with a fantastic range of donations from Exhibitors, Celebrities and Supporters. Additions arrive throughout the weekend so be sure to visit regularly to see what temptations have been added. A selection appears on pages 62–63 in the programme, but visit our website [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk)

for updates right up until the Birdfair weekend. As well as buying your entry ticket, you can support this year's project by being the winning bidder on Auction Lots!

### Birdfair Mural

Protecting migratory birds in the Eastern Mediterranean

The illegal killing of migratory birds has gained considerable attention in the UK in recent months. This year's Birdfair is supporting BirdLife International in securing funding to provide critical leverage for sustaining work on illegal killing in the Eastern Mediterranean. Come and watch some of the UK's finest wildlife artists portray some of these magnificent birds such as the red-footed falcon, sociable lapwing and pallid harrier.

## Events Marquee

(unless otherwise stated)

Sponsored by  
Falkland Islands  
Tourist Board



**\* Thursday 20 August \***

**6:30 pm Whitwell, Rutland Water**  
**Simon King's Wildlife Cruise**

Sponsored by Carl Zeiss Ltd

Join Simon King on this exciting cruise, an opportunity to see a wide variety of birds and wildlife, including our resident ospreys. A member of our Osprey team will also be on board to chat about these magnificent birds and the Rutland Water Osprey Project.

Places are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets: adults £25, children (16 and under) £15.

Book on our website [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk)

**\* Friday 21 August \***

**6:30 am Whitwell, Rutland Water**

**Simon King's Wildlife Cruise**

Sponsored by Carl Zeiss Ltd

Details as Thursday event.

**9:30–10:30 Opening reception and a warm welcome to the 27th Birdfair**

**11:00–11:45**

**Ceri Levy and Ralph Steadman 'From Nextinction to extinction'**

Following *Extinct Boids*, which focused on all the birds we have lost, *Nextinction* examines those birds that are critically endangered right now that could join the ranks of the extinct. These are the birds that we could still save. These



# What's on Friday 21 August

conservationists will reveal just what they discovered on their travels and it should be a riot of plumage, colour and weirdness!

**Ceri and Ralph will be signing copies of *Nextinction* and *Extinct Boids* on the WILD Sounds & Books stand M3/49–53 from 12:00 for approximately 30 minutes. All books sold will benefit the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme for the spoon-billed sandpiper.**

**12:00–12:45**

**Iolo Williams 'Wonderful Welsh Wildlife'**

A whistle-stop tour of the most beautiful country in the world. From mountain top to beneath the waves, Iolo shares some of the most breathtaking wildlife along the way.

**1:15–1:45**

**Moth Trapping 'Live on the big screen!'**

World-famous insect artist Richard Lewington and moth-expert Phil Sterling (co-author of the British Wildlife *Field Guide to Micro Moths*) will be emptying a moth trap, live on the big screen. Using new camera technology and microscopes kindly donated for use in the Event from The One Stop Nature Shop (M2/83–84), to reveal the wonderful world of moths.

**2:00–2:45**

**Simon King 'My World of Wildlife'**

Sponsored by Simon King Wildlife

From sniffing spraint to pestering politicians, Simon reflects on life as a naturalist, conservationist and wildlife film maker.

**Simon will be signing autographs in the Simon King Wildlife Marquee sponsored by Carl Zeiss Ltd 3:00–3:30.**

**3:00–3:45**

**Mark Carwardine 'On the Trail of the Whale'**

In this highly entertaining and thought-provoking talk, Mark Carwardine shares his life-long passion for whales and dolphins while chatting about his never-ending quest for the perfect photograph of friendly grey whales in Baja California, gargantuan blue whales in Iceland, bubble-netting humpback whales in Southeast Alaska, narwhal in Arctic Canada, Amazon river dolphins in Brazil, and many more of the world's most mysterious and remarkable creatures.

**4:00–4:30 Simon King presents: The British Bird Photography Awards**

Sponsored by Anglian Water

Simon will be presenting the award to the three winners of this annual competition.

**4:45–5:30**

**The League Against Cruel Sports presents: Bill Oddie, Ceri Levy and Dr Toni Shephard *The worst places for bird killing in Europe – Malta, Cyprus...and Britain?***

Many know that Malta is a holiday hotspot and a bird hunter's blackspot, but the gratuitous killing of birds is also rife in many other countries, including Britain. Ceri Levy, Bill Oddie and the League Against Cruel Sports have all recently

documented it: hear their reports, ask questions, and resolve to help. Please don't miss it!

**7:30–close**

**An Evening with: Nick Baker, Simon King and Chris Packham**

Sponsored by Carl Zeiss Ltd

Three of the most recognised and respected conservationists are brought together courtesy of Carl Zeiss Ltd. Two young birders, Josie Hewitt and Georgia Locock will be guiding them through entertaining anecdotes and finding out what drives them after many years' in conservation: success, sadness and sacrifices.

Places are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets: £12.50 in advance and £15.00 on the day if any remain. Book online at [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk)

**6:30 pm Whitwell, Rutland Water**

**Mike Dilger's Wildlife Cruise**

A fantastic opportunity, exclusive to the Birdfair! Mike will be hosting this Wildlife Cruise on board the Rutland Belle and will be joined by a member of the Rutland Osprey Project team, ensuring that you have the chance to see an array of wildlife from the water.

Places are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets: adults £25, children (16 and under) £15.

Book on our website [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk)

## Lecture Marquee 1

Sponsored by Speyside Wildlife



**9:30–9:50 Nick Moran**

**Five years in the desert: birds and birding in Arabia**

Sun, sand and...scarce migrants! Nick lived and birded in Arabia for five years and will conduct a whistle-stop virtual tour of this fascinating region.

**10:00–10:20 Josh Jones**

**Northern Peru: the endemic's paradise**

A look at the 'Northern Peru Birding Route' between Tarapoto and Chiclayo, examining its incredible array of birds and habitats.

**10:30–10:50 Ian Wood**

**Uganda – Africa's greatest birding destination?**

Over 1,000 bird species in an area not much larger than Britain, ranging from the prehistoric looking shoebill to a plethora of tiny colourful sunbirds.

**11:00–11:20 Andy Tucker**

**Ecuador – Birds and wildlife in the Andes and Amazon of Ecuador**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A journey from the lowland rainforest to the roof of the Andes looking for a wealth of birdlife, mammals, amphibians and spectacular scenery.

**11:30–11:50 Richard Porter**

**The power of the book in Middle Eastern Nature Conservation**

Richard shares his passion for Middle East birds by helping create 'conservation wise nations' with the help of Arabic Guides – a vital tool for conservation and nature tourism.

**12:00–12:20 Roy Atkins**

**Hungary – Summer birding and photo hides**

Sponsored by Speyside Wildlife

Fabulous east European birding, plus butterflies and even bats make for a great trip, but add photo hides for close up red-footed falcon, bee-eater, hawfinch and roller and its exceptional.

**12:30–12:50 Peter Waanders**

**Creatures of the night: Australia's owls, frogmouths and nightjars**

An introduction to Australia's rich variety of nocturnal birds: seven species of owl, three frogmouths, three nightjars and one owl-nightjar, their ecology and distribution, and hints for watching them.

**1:00–1:20 Nick Acheson**

**The wildlife of Madagascar**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A talk about the lemurs, birds and other unique wildlife of Madagascar. Isolated from mainland Africa for over 100 million years, Madagascar has taken its own evolutionary course and, today, over 80% of all species here are endemic, occurring nowhere else on Earth!

**1:30–1:50 Rick and Elis Simpson**

**Wader quest – waders in peril**

Waders face problems across the planet. This talk highlights some of those problems and looks how community conservation can help.

**2:00–2:20 Darren Rees**

**Yellowstone – birds, bison, bears and more**

Sponsored by Speyside Wildlife

The natural wonders of the world's first and most dynamic National Park – Yellowstone.

**2:30–2:50 James Lowen**

**The bottom of the world: visiting Antarctic Peninsula**

An image-rich odyssey. Glide with albatrosses in the fabled Drake Passage and enjoy penguins aplenty on the hallowed seventh continent.

**3:00–3:20 Nick Acheson**

**Spitsbergen – land of the polar bear**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A wildlife journey around the Arctic island of Spitsbergen, home to polar bears, walrus and millions of breeding seabirds.

**3:30–3:50 Nigel Redman**

**Birding in Somaliland: the final frontier**

Somalia is probably the world's most dangerous country. This talk will introduce



# What's on Friday 21 August

birders to the delights of travelling in Somalia and the many special birds that can be seen there.

**Nigel will be signing copies of his books including *Birds of the Horn of Africa* on the WILD Sounds & Books stand M3/49–53 from 4:00 for approximately 30 minutes.**

**4:00–4:20 Julian Sykes**

**Searching for snow leopards – be prepared!**

Sponsored by Speyside Wildlife

Twice now, Julian has visited the Ladakh region of India in search of the 'Grey Ghost' and portrays the reality of such a venture that can result in an incredible wildlife experience.

**4:30–4:50 Magnus Robb**

**Undiscovered owls – the Sound Approach to Western Palearctic owls**

With four CDs of recordings, the latest book from The Sound Approach led the team to some surprising discoveries about owls.

**5:00–5:20 Gina Beebe Nichol**

**Safari Brazil**

Brazil's Pantanal offers South America's finest birding and wildlife viewing opportunities. Learn about its varied habitats and intriguing, exotic, birds and animals.

**6:00–7:00**

**The RSPB Birders lecture in association with British Birds**

'Best ever days with British Birds' – introduced by Stuart Housden, Director, RSPB Scotland. Remember your best ever days birding? Four celebrated British birders Bill Oddie, Ian Wallace, Adam Rowlands and Lucy McRobert compete for the title of 'best ever day', hear about migrants, falls, artistic splendour and sheer elation with birds! Followed by a drinks reception.

## Lecture Marquee 2

Sponsored by Heatherlea and Argentina National Institute of Tourism Promotion



**9:30–9:50 Mike Read**

**Winter birding in Texas and New Mexico**

This talk visits the Lower Rio Grande Valley and ends at Bosque del Apache where 12,000 sandhill cranes and 35,000 snow geese make spectacular birding.

**10:00–10:20 Tbc**

**Birdwatching experiences in Argentina**

Sponsored by Argentina National Institute of Tourism Promotion

Discover 80 bird families including 20 endemic neotropical species and 16 local endemic species, going from the Andes or Patagonia to the Littoral wetlands and marvellous Iguazú Waterfalls.

**10:30–10:50 Kerem Ali Boyla**

**The foothills of Ararat: unique diversity within the Western Palearctic**

Mount Ararat and its surroundings in North-east Turkey offer a unique combination of species; Mongolian Finch on lava fields, Citrine Wagtail in wet grasslands and Menetries's Warbler along muddy tamarisks.

**11:00–11:20 Ian Ford**

**Scotland's best birding in just three days**

Sponsored by Heatherlea

Ideal for busy birders who want to round-up Scotland's special birds in just a few days!

**11:30–11:50 Gerard Gorman**

**Worldwide woodpeckers**

Tales of tramping the world's woodlands in search of this fascinating group of birds.

Gerard will be signing copies of his books including Woodpeckers of the World and Birding in Eastern Europe on the WILD Sounds & Books stand M3/49–53 from 12:00 for approximately 30 minutes.

**12:00–12:20 Phil Knott**

**Outer Hebrides – Scotland's 'Outer Limits'!**

Sponsored by Heatherlea

Join us for a journey to the 'Outer Limits' – it offers great birding between May and October.

**12:30–12:50 Dan Free**

**Kazakhstan – Birding the mountains and deserts of central Asia**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A journey across the varied landscapes of Kazakhstan, in search of the region's many avian highlights.

**1:00–1:20 Martin Beaton**

**Birds of the Falkland Islands**

Sponsored by Falkland Islands Tourist Board

For the fast listeners with quick eyes, this is a sprint that outlines almost all of the birds found on the Falkland Islands.

**1:30–1:50 Luke Paterson**

**Birding on Darwin's doorstep: scoping into pockets of paradise**

Sponsored by Australia's Northern Territory Come on a brief tour of the significant birding hotspots around Darwin.

**2:00–2:20 Tbc**

**Iberá Birds**

Sponsored by Argentina National Institute of Tourism Promotion

A trip looking for native Argentinean birds, in the middle of the amazing colours of the Iberá, a large wetlands' system with more than 350 species.

**2:30–2:50 Dr Latika Nath**

**The changing secret lives of tigers**

Two decades studying tigers of central India revealed a changing social organisation and behaviour pattern in the tigers of Central India and Rajasthan. Find out how they are adapting to changing habitats, and pressures from human development.

**3:00–3:20 Oliver Yates**

**Saving the albatross: advances from the Albatross Task Force**

The Albatross Task Force is achieving spectacular reductions in seabird bycatch by working with fishing captains and crew in seven countries in South America and southern Africa.

**3:30–3:50 Chris Wood and Jessie Barry**

**How to find 294 species in Texas in a day (or week)**

Hear about Team Sapsucker's amazing day and learn how to see even more during your trip!

**4:00–4:20 Andy Tucker**

**The wildlife of southern Peru – from coast to Amazon**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

Some of the highlights of southern Peru: a wildlife-filled journey from the Humboldt Current to the Amazon, Peru's high Andes, Cusco and Machu Picchu.

**4:30–4:50 Barrie Cooper**

**Belarus: Europe's secret wildlife hotspot**

Ancient forests and marshes make Belarus a rich country for wildlife – probably the easiest European country to see azure tit and aquatic warbler. Mammals include lynx, wolf, bison and beaver.

**5:00–5:20 Nick Joynes**

**Namibia: a land of contrasts**

Wildlife Worldwide co-director Nick Joynes first travelled to Namibia in 2001, returning almost every year since. He provides a fascinating overview of this remarkable destination.

## Lecture Marquee 3

Sponsored by Aigas, Field Centre and Tribes Travel



**9:30–9:50 Andy Howes**

**Boletas Birdwatching Centre in Spain**

A superb base for doing your own birding or for a guided experience.

**10:00–10:20 Paul Sanbury**

**The wildlife of Zambia's South Luangwa Valley**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

Join a safari to one of Africa's finest wildlife reserves – home to colourful colonies of carmine bee-eaters, plus lions, wild dogs and many other species.

**10:30–10:50 Sir John Lister-Kaye**

**Gods of the morning: a bird's eye view of a Highland year**

Sponsored by Aigas Field Centre

Sir John discusses some of the impacts of climate change on the birds around his famous Aigas Field Centre home.

**11:00–11:20 Amanda Marks**

**Madagascar: lemurs, baobabs and more**

Sponsored by Tribes Travel



# What's on Friday 21 August

The tropical island of Madagascar is a uniquely wonderful world; lemurs such as singing indris and dancing sifakas, diverse chameleons and geckos, and strange habitats like the spiny forest with its gentle giants, the baobabs

**11:30–11:50 Paul French**

**Batumi & southern Georgia - autumn migration along the Black Sea**

Over a million raptors can't be wrong! Batumi is one of the world's great migration spectacles, and it's not just for raptors.

**12:00–12:20 Dr Claire Papazoglou**

**Illegal bird trapping in Cyprus - a UK and flyway conservation problem**

The campaign of BirdLife Cyprus, including monitoring, lobbying and awareness raising, with special emphasis on the situation on British bases.

**12:30–12:50 Andrew Forsyth**

**The Daintree: birding in Australia's unique Tropical North Queensland rainforest**

Where two World Heritage listed areas meet – the Daintree Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef – a potent mix of birds and habitats.

**1:00–1:20 Dr Callan Cohen**

**Birding Tanzania: combining East Africa birding with the wildebeest migration**

Tanzania has amongst the best birding in Africa and hosts one of world's greatest natural spectacles – the wildebeest migration. Callan describes the birding highlights of the Serengeti, Ngorongoro and more.

**1:30–1:50 Daniel Petrescu**

**Twenty years of birding in the Danube Delta and Dobrogea**

A short history of birdwatching in the area: how things have changed and what to expect if you visit today.

**2:00–2:20 Guy Marks**

**Wildlife of the Galapagos**

Sponsored by Tribes Travel

A look at the amazing wildlife of the Galapagos with tips about how best to experience these islands.

**2:30–2:50 Yeo Siew Teck**

**The Jewel of birding in Sarawak Borneo ~ Paya Maga**

A new birding destination for Borneo; the extension of Borneo birding tour for Bornean black oriole and Dulit frogmouth.

**3:00–3:20 Warwick Lister-Kaye**

**Winter wolves of Yellowstone National Park**

Sponsored by Aigas Field Centre

Search through pristine winter wilderness for Yellowstone's famous reintroduced wolves.

**3:30–3:50 Irshad Mabarak**

**Malaysia: an ecological hotspot**

Sponsored by Malaysia Tourism

When it comes to what is on land and in the ocean Malaysia is truly The Greatest Show on Earth'!

**4:00–4:20 Phoebe Smith**

**Wilderness weekends: finding the wild places in Britain**

What makes a place wild? And how do we best connect with the wilderness?

**4:30–4:50 Max Whitby**

**Filming every bird in Europe**

The remarkable story behind a 20-year project to film all 794 European bird species.

**5:00–5:20 Dimitar Georgiev**

**Target birding in Bulgaria**

Bulgaria is in a key position for excellent conditions to enjoy the most wanted species of birds in South-eastern Europe.

## AWBC Lectures

Sponsored by Gambia Tourism Board



**9:30–9:50 Keith Valentine**

**Birding Peninsular Malaysia and Borneo**

The fabulous rainforests of Malaysia and Borneo offer an exceptional birding and wildlife experience.

**10:00–10:20 Kate Plummer**

**Evolution in your back garden: Blackcaps in Britain**

Blackcaps from central Europe started wintering in Britain 60 years ago. That they are now common visitors is the result of rapid evolution, but what has driven this change?

**10:30–10:50 Carl Downing**

**Mitú, the hidden jewel of the Amazon**

Visit Mitú, in the heart of the Colombian Amazon. With a complex array of habitat types Mitú offers one of the greatest hidden Amazonian diversity locations.

**11:00–11:20 Jessie Barry, Brian Sullivan and Chris Wood**

**A new paradigm in birding: Digital SLR video**

Digital SLR video will revolutionize birding, but it's difficult to get started. We'll share tips on how to get great HD video.

**11:30–11:50 Dr Tonia Cochran**

**Honeyeaters: Interpreting Australia's largest and most diverse bird family**

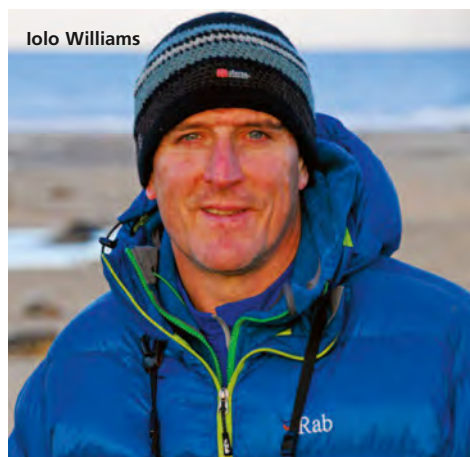
Almost 50% of the 182 known species of honeyeater are found in Australia. This talk will focus on the diversity of this family and their importance to the Australian ecosystem.

**12:00–12:20 Martin Kelsey**

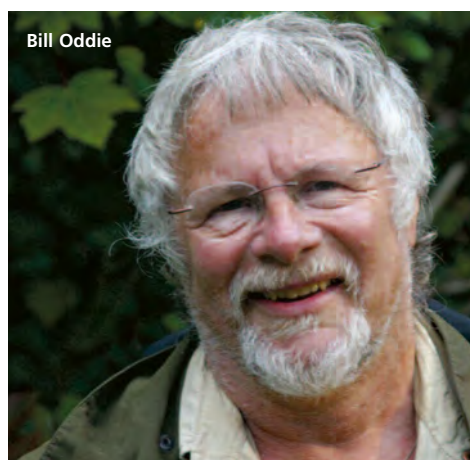
**Top 10 birding sites in Extremadura**

Sponsored by Extremadura

A personal selection by one of Extremadura's top birding guides of the 10 best recommended sites for visiting birders to explore and enjoy.



Iolo Williams



Bill Oddie



Mike Dilger



Nick Baker



# What's on Friday 21 August

**12:30–12:50 Graham Jones and James Bray**  
**Hope for hen harriers?**

Illegally persecuted and in steep decline, hen harriers are the most hotly debated species in British wildlife conservation.

**1:00–1:20 Mike and Paula Webster**  
**DIY Birding in Argentina and Chile**

Michael and Paula have travelled around Argentina and Chile for the past year. Come and hear about what they have seen.

**1:30–1:50 Dawn Balmer**

**What do we know about house martins?**

What we do and don't know about house martins and how the House Martin Survey will help plug a gap in knowledge.

**2:00–2:20 Richard Moores, Dan Brown and Martyn Owen**

**Tails of the unexpected: the art of camera trapping**

Camera-trapping is becoming more popular and can be put to great use for environmental monitoring. We look at when, where, and how to use camera-traps successfully.

**2:30–2:50 Vanesa Palacios**

**Travelling around Extremadura – New App: Birding in Extremadura**

Sponsored by Extremadura

This App helps your birding trip in Extremadura. If you want to do your own thing or prefer to hire professional guides, need help finding accommodation, want descriptions of the landscapes or general tourist information – you have it all here!

**3:00–3:20 Neil Glenn**

**An introduction to The Gambia**

Sponsored by Gambia Tourism Board

Why The Gambia is an exciting and safe introduction to African birding.

**3:30–3:50 Elizabeth Ball**

**Satellite tracking to identify migration hazards around the Mediterranean**

Satellite tracking is an important tool to follow Egyptian vultures' and other raptors' migratory journey around the Mediterranean to Africa.

**4:00–4:20 Jen Jones**

**Saving the mangrove finch – a bird on the brink**

The critically endangered mangrove finch has an estimated population of only 80. Discover how a cutting edge project in Galapagos aims to bring this species back from the brink.

**4:30–4:50 Colin Cross**

**Gambia Eco-lodge holidays and Kartong Bird Observatory**

Sponsored by Gambia Tourism Board  
Best opportunities for tailored birding itineraries in 'real' Gambia staying in quality eco-lodges, birding with experienced guides.

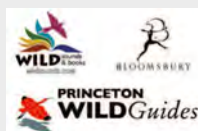
**5:00–5:20 Steve Lovell**

**Top tips for wildlife gardening**

With over 20 years of professional experience creating and maintaining gardens, Steve shares his observations to help make your garden more wildlife friendly.

## Authors Forum

Sponsored by WILD Sounds & Books, Princeton WILDGuides and Bloomsbury Publishing



**9:30–10:15 Martin Garner and Andy Roadhouse**

**The Challenge Series: Winter and The Birds of Spurn**

Book two in the Challenge series is being launched! Bringing new insights in subjects like 'grey' shrikes, redwings and Brännich's guillemots, and tackling thorny topics like water and buff-bellied pipits, and large falcons. Also featuring Andy Roadhouse, author of The Birds of Spurn, the first fully documented history of birds recorded in the Spurn area between 19th Century and 2014.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Martin's publications.**

**10:30–11:15 Adam Scott Kennedy**  
**Birds of Kenya's Rift Valley, of the Serengeti, and Birds and Animals of the Masai Mara**

Sponsored by Princeton WILDGuides

Adam leads photographic and wildlife safaris in Tanzania and Kenya. Together with his wife he has published a number of beautiful photographic guides to the regions they visit.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Adam's publications.**

**11:30–12:15 David Lindo**

**Tales from Concrete Jungles: David Lindo travels the world in search of urban birds**

Sponsored by Bloomsbury Publishing

David Lindo, also known as The Urban Birder, has visited over 270 cities worldwide in search of urban birds. During his travels he has found a surprising number of committed conservationists, interesting birding locations and importantly, many birds.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed David's publications.**

**12:30–1:15 Bill Oddie Author, Presenter and Ambassador for all things wild**  
**Bill Oddie Unplucked**

Sponsored by WILD Sounds and Books

Bill will trace his attraction to and pursuit of birds from toddler to senior citizen, including diversions to Top of the Pops

and Buckingham Palace. He will also willingly answer questions, as long as they are not all 'What's your favourite bird?' or 'Should Jeremy Clarkson have been fired?'

**Bill will be signing copies of his books including Bill Oddie Unplucked and Bill Oddie's Little Black Bird Book (In print for over 35 years!) on the WILD Sounds & Books stand Marquee 3/49–53 from 1:30 for approximately 45 minutes.**

**1:30–2:15 David Newland**

**Britain's Butterflies: A Field Guide to the Butterflies of Britain and Ireland**

Sponsored by Princeton WILDGuides

David is one of the authors of this comprehensive and superbly designed photographic guide – recently revised and updated – and of two other Princeton WILDGuides books. He has taken many of the photos in his books and will share tips on searching for, identifying and photographing butterflies and moths in the wild.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed David's publications.**

**2:30–3:15 Mark Avery**

**Inglorious: Why it's time to say 'bye bye!' to grouse shooting**

Sponsored by Bloomsbury Publishing

Driven grouse shooting deprives us of our wildlife, damages 'protected' wildlife sites, increases greenhouse gas emissions, increasing house insurance (through increasing flood risk) and puts up water bills (through polluting watercourses). It is an unsustainable activity for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Mark's publications.**

**3:30–4:15 Patrick Barkham**  
**Coastlines and Conservation**

Sponsored by WILD Sounds and Books

Award-winning author Patrick Barkham's portrait of our unique relationship with our shores, and the wildlife and people we find there.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Patrick's publications.**

**4:30–5:15 Paul Stancliffe**

**Bird Identification – a new take on an old theme**

Sponsored by HarperCollinsPublishers

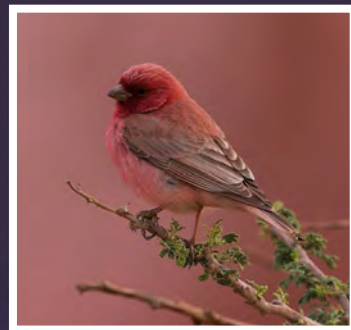
How bird identification has moved on in the last forty years, exploring what we have learned and what we can look forward to.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Paul's publications.**



# BIRDS OF JORDAN

*At the junction of Asia, Europe and Africa, Jordan is home to a diverse range of birds!*



The country boasts 27 important bird areas rich in fauna and flora, from coastal wetlands, desert oases and dramatic wadis to verdant forests, alpine meadows and rugged mountains. Together they are home to an impressive range of special birds, including such enigmatic species as **Sooty Falcon**, **White-eyed Gull**, **Desert Tawny Owl**, **Nubian Nightjar**, **Basalt Wheatear**, **Arabian Warbler**, **Syrian Serin**, **Dead Sea Sparrow** and Jordan's national bird, **Sinai Rosefinch**. Some of these specialities are more numerous or easier to see here than anywhere else in the world.

The Rift Valley margins hold a superb range of raptors, among them **Bonelli's Eagle**, **Long-legged Buzzard** and **Barbary Falcon**, and even the regionally rare **Verreaux's Eagle** is occasionally reported. In the rocky valleys and deserts, **Long-billed Pipit**, **Thick-billed**, **Temminck's** and **Hoopoe Larks**, **Streaked Scrub Warbler**, **Blackstart** and **Red-rumped Wheatear** are among the many attractions.

Exceptional birdwatching is possible during migration, when many millions of birds stream through the country. In the right conditions huge numbers of **White Storks**, **Steppe Eagles**, **Steppe Buzzards** and **Common Cranes** are accompanied by many other raptors and large soaring birds. Countless migrant wagtails, warblers, shrikes, flycatchers, chats and buntings also pass through in spring and autumn, with the biggest concentrations on the coast at Aqaba, now home to its very own bird observatory and a great base for a birding holiday.



visit  Jordan

Jordan Tourism Board  
[www.visitjordan.com](http://www.visitjordan.com)





## An evening with **Nick Baker, Simon King & Chris Packham**

Sponsored by Carl Zeiss Ltd

**The Events Marquee Friday 21 August 2015 7:30 pm**

Places are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets: £12.50 in advance and £15.00 on the day if any remain.

**Book online at [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk)**

Three of the most recognised and respected conservationists are brought together courtesy of Carl Zeiss Ltd. Two young birders, Josie Hewitt and Georgia Locock will be guiding them through entertaining anecdotes, curious confessions, and finding out what drives them after so many years in conservation: success, sadness and sacrifices.

## Zone in to Cook Street!

**MPM Catering are Birdfair's new caterers and they will be bringing to the event their exciting new food zone – 'Cook Street'. It's a collaboration of artisan operators who sell great food outdoors using honest, fresh, seasonal ingredients, with true food provenance and the best in customer service.**



### **Alice May**

A cool nod to the American diner

### **Sizzling Squid**

A traditional classic with a twist – special recipe beer-batter, sustainable fish fillets.

### **The Whole Hog**

Slow-roasted pulled pork, homemade stuffing, freshly baked rolls and crackling.

### **The Bread Basket**

For handmade rustic food from salads to handcrafted artisan sandwiches.

### **Stone-Baked Pizza**

A great choice of toppings and a wonderful smell from the ovens.

### **Oriental Noodle Bar**

Fresh food, bursting with oriental flavour, cooked using traditional wok stir-frying.

### **Baked Potato**

Freshly cooked, crisp outside, pure and fluffy inside, with a range of fillings.

### **German Sausage**

Enjoy the authentic flavour of a smoked krakauer sausage or a tasty bratwurst.

### **Churros and Coffees**

A delicious fried-dough pastry snack to be enjoyed with a speciality coffee.

### **Pick and Mix**

An all-time favourite array of sweets, fudge, rock, jellies, chocolates.

### **Champagne Bar**

Next to Optics Marquee.





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## The One Stop NatureShop

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**www.onestopnature.co.uk**

# RSPB Birders' Lecture: Best Days with British Birds

**6 pm on  
Friday 21 August  
Lecture Marquee 1  
Birdfair**



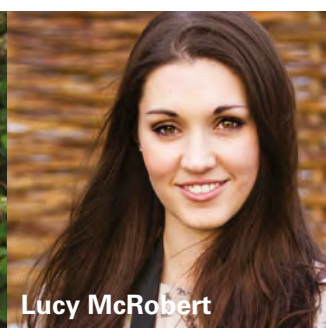
Bill Oddie



Ian Wallace



Adam Rowlands



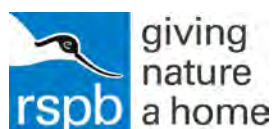
Lucy McRobert

**Four celebrated birders** share their top birding experiences in the UK. But whose tale is the very best?

You decide who will win the "Best Ever Day" title as Bill Oddie, Ian Wallace, Adam Rowlands and Lucy McRobert tell us stories of migrants, falls, artistic splendour and the sheer elation felt in the company of birds. **All welcome.** Followed by drinks reception.

Visit the RSPB stand, M3/33 – 37 and the *British Birds* stand, M3/24 – 25.

Working together to give nature a home





# What's on Saturday 22 August

## All Weekend Events

### Rutland Water Nature Reserves

Don't forget that once you've paid for your entrance to the Birdfair you also have access to the Rutland Water Nature Reserves on the day of your ticket. Make time to go birding and explore Eggleton and Lyndon Nature Reserves. On 5 February 2015, Rutland Water Nature Reserve was announced as 'Britain's Favourite Nature Reserve' in the Landlove Magazine awards! More than 25,000 votes were cast from their readers, who took the time to 'vote to help celebrate the very best things about the British countryside and reward the people who stand out to make it so wonderful'. The team here at Rutland Water are thrilled to receive the award, made extra special by the fact that the public decided the winners.

### Birdfair Auction

Every year the Auction Marquee is packed with a fantastic range of donations from Exhibitors, Celebrities and Supporters. Additions arrive throughout the weekend so be sure to visit regularly to see what temptations have been added. A selection appears on pages 62–63 in the programme, but visit our website [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk) for updates right up until the Birdfair weekend. As well as buying your entry ticket, you can support this year's project by being the winning bidder on Auction Lots!

### Birdfair Mural

Protecting migratory birds in the Eastern Mediterranean

The illegal killing of migratory birds has gained considerable attention in the UK in recent months. This year's Birdfair is supporting BirdLife International in securing funding to provide critical leverage for sustaining work on illegal killing in the Eastern Mediterranean. Come and watch some of the UK's finest wildlife artists portray some of these magnificent birds such as the red-footed falcon, sociable lapwing and pallid harrier.

## Events Marquee

(unless otherwise stated)

Sponsored by  
Falkland Islands  
Tourist Board



### 6:30 am Whitwell, Rutland Water Simon King Wildlife Cruise

Sponsored by Carl Zeiss Ltd

Join Simon King on this exciting Rutland Water cruise, offering the opportunity to see a wide variety of birds and wildlife, including our resident ospreys. A member of our Osprey team will also be on board to chat about these magnificent birds and the Rutland Water Osprey Project.

Places are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets: adults £25, children (16 and under) £15.

Book on our website [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk)

**10:00–10:45**

### Mike Dilger 'Wildlife on Your Doorstep'

Overdosed on watching lions in the Serengeti? Anaesthetised to polar bears in the Arctic? Sick of watching wildlife you'll never have the chance to see anywhere but on television? If so, then it's time to rediscover the joys of wildlife watching right under our noses, in our own back gardens and our towns and cities. BBC Wild man Mike Dilger brings you surprising stories from familiar places.

**11:00–11:45**

### A Question of Stork chaired by Stephen Moss

Lighthearted and fun quizzing for all the family! This year, we pitch Birdfair's Tim Appleton against Jim Lawrence of BirdLife – a hearty battle if ever there were one! Find out who knows their Barbets from their Bulbuls, who can mime the fastest and who's brave enough to go "away"! Stephen Moss chairs, and will no doubt be kept busy!

**12:00–12:45**

### The BTO presents: Chris Packham and the Young Birders

Chris Packham has inspired generations of young conservationists, from his early days on the Really Wild Show to his more recent success as presenter of the 'Watches' and independent campaigner and film maker. Chris will reveal what inspired him as a child before introducing three remarkable young birders who will share their experiences of getting into birdwatching.

**Chris will be appearing on the BTO stand  
M3/36–38 at 2:00.**

**1:00–1:45**

### Martin Hughes-Games – 'A Wild Life'

Martin Hughes-Games gives a highly entertaining account of 30 years' travelling the world to film wildlife, including polar bears, man-eating tigers and killer crocodiles – as well as jumping out of balloons with speeding peregrine falcons, offering himself to hungry vampire bats and getting into bed with exceedingly venomous giant centipedes.

**Martin will be signing copies of A Wild Life on the WILD Sounds & Books stand  
M3/49–53 from 2:00 pm for approximately  
45 minutes.**

**2:00–2:45**

### Simon King 'My World of Wildlife'

Sponsored by Simon King Wildlife

From sniffing spraint to pestering politicians – Simon King reflects on life as

a naturalist, conservationist and wildlife film maker.

**Simon will be signing autographs in the  
Simon King Wildlife Marquee sponsored  
by Carl Zeiss Ltd 3:00–3:30.**

**3:00–3:45**

### Bird Brain of Britain chaired by Bill Oddie Sponsored by Swarovski Optik

How much do the birding experts know under pressure? That pressure is even greater when it's not just their pride at stake but £2,000 prize money, which will be spent on conservation projects or donated to a bird charity.

The four contestants with their specialist subjects are:

**Tom Lewis** representing the African Bird Club with *The Endemic birds of Sao Tome*

**Tom McKinney** representing the Ornithological Society of the Middle East with Birds in the music of Olivier Messiaen

**Stuart Elsom** representing the Oriental Bird Club with *Rare Birds in Britain in the 1980s*

**Fiona Barclay** representing the British Trust for Ornithology with Notable female figures in Birding

**Bill will be signing copies of his books including Bill Oddie Unplucked and Bill Oddie's Little Black Bird Book (In print for over 35 years!) on the WILD Sounds & Books stand M3/49–53 from 4:00pm for approximately 45 minutes.**

**4:00–4:45**

### Mark Carwardine 'On the Trail of the Whale'

In this highly entertaining and thought-provoking talk, Mark Carwardine shares his life-long passion for whales and dolphins while chatting about his never-ending quest for the perfect photograph of friendly grey whales in Baja California, gargantuan blue whales in Iceland, bubble-netting humpback whales in Southeast Alaska, narwhal in Arctic Canada, Amazon river dolphins in Brazil, and many more of the world's most mysterious and remarkable creatures.

**5:00–5:45**

### David Lindo 'How the Election was won'

What started as a daydream in a primary school classroom ended up as being the UK's biggest ever natural history election – to name Britain's first official National Bird. David Lindo, the driving force behind the campaign, shed blood, sweat, tears and a few feathers to bring the campaign to the masses.

**David is exhibiting again this year; go along and say 'hello' to The Urban Birder in M8/16.**



# What's on Saturday 22 August

Mark Carwardine



Chris Packham



David Lindo



Stephen Moss



7:30pm–close

## An Evening with: Craig Ogden, Gary Ryan and Milos Milivojevic

Sponsored by Viking Optical Ltd

Come and enjoy an evening with three world-class musicians performing music from Vivaldi right through the centuries to George Harrison.

Places are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets: £12.50 in advance and £15.00 on the day if any remain. Book online at [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk)

6:30 pm Whitwell, Rutland Water

## Nick Baker's Wildlife Cruise

Sponsored by Carl Zeiss Ltd

Nick will be hosting this Wildlife Cruise on board the Rutland Belle and will be joined by a member of the Rutland Osprey Project team, ensuring that you have the chance to see an array of wildlife from the water.

Places are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets: adults £25, children (16 and under) £15.

Book on our website [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk)

## Lecture Marquee 1

Sponsored by Speyside Wildlife



9:30–9:50 Steve Micklewright

## Malta – what next after the referendum to abolish spring hunting?

BirdLife Malta initiated a campaign to force a referendum on banning spring hunting. The result of the public vote will have far-reaching implications on bird conservation in the Mediterranean.

10:00–10:20 Shena Maskell and Cristian Jenson

## A Moroccan magic–carpet ride: visiting desert, oasis, mountain and shore

Our 10 day tour in 20 minutes, showing where we find sought-after birds in their scenic habitat...whilst you live like a king!

10:30–10:50 Carlos Bethancourt

## The natural splendour of Panama!

A photographic journey of the tropical birds, bizarre mammals, unusual reptiles and amphibians and spectacular habitats from the Canal Zone of Central Panama, into the foothills of western Panama and then into eastern Panama.

11:00–11:20 Andy Tucker

## Peru – birds, mammals and culture in Northern Peru

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A journey across the varied landscapes of northern Peru, with endemic birds amongst the many highlights.

11:30–11:50 Dr Zhu Lei

## Sichuan: A Land of 'Chinese' Birds

An essentials introduction to the birds of Sichuan and selected birding sites.

12:00–12:20 Craig Round

## Wildlife of Shetland and Orkney

Sponsored by Speyside Wildlife

The far northern isles, with spectacular seabird colonies and incredible archaeological sites. Craig will uncover the magic of the land of the 'Simmer Dim'.

12:30–12:50 Dominic Couzens

## Extreme Animals

Want to know which animal sleeps the most, makes the neatest poos, kills the most of its own kind and has the least pleasant day-job? Then this talk is for you!

Dominic will be signing copies of his books including *Tales of Remarkable Birds* on the WILD Sounds & Books stand M3/49–53 from 4:00 for approximately 30 minutes.

1:00–1:20 Nick Acheson

## The Pantanal – in search of the jaguar!

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A journey to the vast wetlands of the Pantanal in search of the largest cat in the Americas, the magnificent jaguar.

1:30–1:50 Tormod Amundsen and Dale Forbes

## See the unseen of Varanger – nature displayed in absolute perfection

Sponsored by Swarovski

Presenting Varanger's birds, landscapes, people and observation opportunities in a truly unique and spectacular polar location.

2:00–2:20 Roy Atkins

## The Pantanal

Sponsored by Speyside Wildlife

The wildlife of the Pantanal – perhaps the best place in the world to see Jaguar. This exciting part of Brazil floods every year and as the waters dry out the wonderful wildlife becomes concentrated and easier to see.

2:30–2:50 Keith Valentine

## Birding Ethiopia – the roof of Africa

A look at what this fabulous region has to offer: phenomenal birding and wildlife viewing not to be missed!

3:00–3:20 Nick Acheson

## Big cat quest

Sponsored by Naturetrek

In 2015 Naturetrek tour leader Nick Acheson has set himself an unusual challenge: to see all of the world's big cats in a single year, plus as many of the small cats as possible.

3:30–3:50 Irshad Mabarak

## Birdwatching to peninsular Malaysia with a focus on the Northern Route and Langkawi

Sponsored by Malaysia Tourism

Malaysia including both the Peninsular and Borneo is home to over 740 species of birds. There are three main routes for birding in the peninsular, covering four ecological zones namely i.e. montane forest, lowland forest and wetland and shore birds.



# What's on Saturday 22 August

**4:00–4:20 John Picton**

**Wildlife of Speyside**

Sponsored by Speyside Wildlife

A tour through Speyside's unique habitats and exciting wildlife.

**4:30–4:50 Adam Riley**

**The birds and wildlife of Bali and Komodo**

These two small Indonesian islands offer unique and exciting birding and wildlife viewing.

**5:00–5:20 Chris Collins**

**Birds and wildlife of the Russian Far East**

Few people visit the Russian Far East despite amazing wildlife including Steller's sea-eagles, and brown bears. This talk will also include an update on recent surveys for breeding Spoon-billed Sandpipers

## Lecture Marquee 2

Sponsored  
by Heatherlea  
and Argentina  
National Institute  
of Tourism Promotion



**9.30–9.50 Tarvo Walker**

**Estonia – unique land for Arctic waterfowl migration**

Estonia is the most important bottleneck for Arctic waterfowl in Western Palearctic; about 5–6 million waterfowls pass on their journey from wintering grounds to breeding areas in Arctic tundra.

**10:00–10:20 Tbc**

**Birdwatching experiences in Argentina**

Sponsored by Argentina National Institute of Tourism Promotion

Discover 80 bird families including 20 endemic Neotropical species and 16 local endemic species, going from the Andes or the Patagonia to the Litoral wetlands and Iguazú Waterfalls.

**10:30–10:50 Mike Watson**

**Belarus: birding behind the Iron Curtain**

Belarus has opened up to western visitors in recent years and birding its relatively undeveloped landscape is like stepping back in time!

**11:00–11:20 Phil Knott**

**Scotland's best birding in just three days**

Sponsored by Heatherlea

Ideal for busy birders who want to round-up Scotland's special birds in just a few days!

**11:30–11:50 Tony Thorne and Ian Loyd**

**How and where to best see Guyana's birds and wildlife**

Learn about and explore Guyana's amazing birds, wildlife and natural history from an insider and meet Ian's top wildlife sightings.

**12.00–12.20 Herbert Byaruhanga**

**Ecotourism development in Uganda – birds and birding**

Birding increasingly contributes to

ecotourism in Uganda, especially in communities neighbouring tourism areas. Communities that once destroyed habitats, now cherish them.

**12:30–12:50 Nick Acheson**

**The wildlife of Madagascar**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

The lemurs, birds and other unique wildlife of Madagascar. Isolated from mainland Africa for over 100 million years, Madagascar has taken its own evolutionary course and, today, over 80% of all species here are endemic, occurring nowhere else on Earth!

**1:00–1:20 Toby Green**

**Goa – fantastic birding at a relaxed pace**

Sponsored by Heatherlea

Goa offers a huge variety of birds in a wide range of habitats, from the Western Ghats, to coastal marshes and mangrove-lined estuaries.

**1:30–1:50 Mick Jerram**

**Sandstone endemics of Northern Territory**

Sponsored by Australia's Northern Territory

The most well-known features of the Northern Territory is the Sandstone Escarpment and Plateau of Kakadu, Arnhemland and Nitmiluk – ruggedly beautiful and isolated environment – home to endemic flora and fauna.

**2:00–2:20 Rob Lambert**

**Wildlife in trust: a birder's guide**

A birder's seasonal journey through the nature reserves and landscapes managed by The Wildlife Trusts.

**2:30–2:50 Tim Mackrill**

**Rutland's Ospreys Go Global**

Tim will update you with all the latest Osprey news from Rutland. He'll also explain how Ospreys are helping to link schools across the world and talk about the project's important education work in West Africa

**3:00–3:20 Forrest Rowland**

**Colombia: 1,000 birds in one month**

The adventures of birders who have joined us in our quest for 1,000 birds in less than a month!

**3:30–3:50 Martin Beaton**

**Weddell Island – a haven for birds**

Sponsored by Falkland Islands Tourist Board

The Falkland Islands are attracting increasing numbers of wildlife enthusiasts and photographers. If you've never been there – go to this lecture....the photographs speak for themselves.

**4:00–4:20 Paul Stanbury**

**The wildlife of Zambia's South Luangwa Valley**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A safari to one of Africa's finest wildlife reserves – home to colourful colonies of carmine bee-eaters, plus lions, wild dogs and many other species.

**4:30–4:50 Tbc**

**Songs of the jungle at Iguazú Falls**

Sponsored by Argentina National Institute of Tourism Promotion

The Iguazú National Park comprises 166,000 acres and it was declared mankind natural heritage by UNESCO. It has imposing waterfalls and more than 400 bird species.

**5:00–5:20 Lucy McRobert**

**Wildlife in trust: a mammal-watcher's guide**

A year exploring some of our most charismatic species – from minke whales to dormice – where to see them and The Wildlife Trusts' work that's helping them.

## Lecture Marquee 3

Sponsored  
by Aigas,  
Field Centre  
and Tribes Travel



**9:30–9:50 Jonny Rankin and Robert Yaxley**

**Dove Step – a journey for turtle doves**

An overview of the Dove Step campaign to date, raising both funds and awareness for Operation Turtle Dove through endurance.

**10:00–10:20 Dan Free**

**Kazakhstan – birding the mountains and deserts of central Asia**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A journey across the varied landscapes of Kazakhstan, in search of the region's many avian highlights.

**10:30–10:50 Sir John Lister-Kaye**

**Ravens and peregrines – unlikely nesting neighbours**

Sponsored by Aigas Field Centre

The story of two Highland nests side by side.

**11:00–11:20 Amanda Marks**

**Wildlife and wilderness of Northern Tanzania**

Sponsored by Tribes Travel

From the wildebeest migration in the Serengeti, to the Ngorongoro Crater, excellent bird life, lions of Manyara and elephant herds in Tarangire, this part of Africa is not to be missed.

**11:30–11:50 Tony Davis**

**An introduction to moth identification for birders**

Tony shows what resources are available to help learn how to identify moths, together with a few tips to get started.

**12:00–12:20 Jack Perks**

**Wildlife wonders of Cornwall**

This talk gives a glimpse into the county's natural history both above and below the water.

**12:30–12:50 Vanesa Palacios**

**Travelling around Extremadura – New App: Birding in Extremadura**

Sponsored by Extremadura



# What's on Saturday 22 August

An App to help your birding trip in the region: whether you want to do your own thing or prefer to hire professional guides, need help finding accommodation, want descriptions of the landscapes or general tourist information.

**1:00–1:20 Charlie Moores & Mark Avery**  
**Birders against wildlife crime**

Sponsored by WILD Sounds and Books

'The Three R's – Recognise, Record, Report' or 'How we birders can all help tackle wildlife crime without doing much more than we're all doing already!'

**Mark Avery will be signing copies of his books including Inglorious on the WILD Sounds & Books stand M3/49–53 from 1.30 for approximately 45 minutes.**

**1:30–1:50 Claire Thompson**

**Hope for migratory birds in the Eastern Mediterranean**

The BirdLife International Lecture

A look at the work of the BirdLife Partnership funded by this year's Birdfair to protect the hundreds of millions of migratory birds that pass through the Eastern Mediterranean twice yearly.

**2:00–2:20 Guy Marks**

**Wildlife of the Galapagos**

Sponsored by Tribes Travel

A look at the amazing wildlife of the Galapagos with helpful tips about how best to experience these islands.

**2:30–2:50 Ruary Mackenzie Dodds**

**Dragonflies: the birdwatchers insect!**

Get up to speed on dragonflies and dragonfly-watching. Dragonflies are at their best in July/August, just when birds are quietest.

**3:00–3:20 Katie Hatton**

**Slavonian grebe: the rare jewel in the Highland loch**

Sponsored by Aigas Field Centre

The Slavonian grebe is one of Britain's rarest and most beautiful breeding birds. The British breeding range is restricted almost entirely to the Scottish Highlands.

**3:30–3:50 Beth Aucott**

**A Focus on Nature – the network for young nature conservationists**

A Focus on Nature provides opportunities, mentors and events to inspire today's youth about the natural world.

**4:00–4:20 Andy Musgrove**

**Could there be 1,000 species near your home?**

In 2013 Andy set out to record 1,000 species in the 1Km square around his home – absolutely everything from grasses and mosses to fungi, flowers and flies.

**4:30–4:50 Martin Kelsey**

**Top ten birding sites in Extremadura**

Sponsored by Extremadura

A personal selection by one of Extremadura's top birding guides of the

ten best recommended sites for visiting birders to explore and enjoy.

**5:00–5:20 Gabor Orban**

**Birds, butterflies, bears and bats: four and more reasons to visit Eastern Europe!**

Wonderful pictures of wildlife and landscapes of Eastern Europe from Belarus, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and the Balkans.

## AWBC Lectures

Sponsored by Gambia Tourism Board



**9:30–9:50 Roger White**

**Birdwatching in North East Germany and its Baltic coast**

The forest and wetland breeding birds of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern include lesser spotted eagle, whiskered tern, and rosefinch. Divers, and thousands of sea duck are winter coastal visitors.

**10:00–10:20 John Hague**

**Phonescoping for all**

Unlock the photographic power of your phone!

**10:30–10:50 Viola Ross-Smith**

**The secret lives of your friendly neighbourhood gulls**

Although gulls are familiar to (and unpopular with) many, tracking devices are revealing surprising things about them.

**11:00–11:20 David Chandler and Matt Merritt**

**Birding optics Q&A**

A quick introduction to binoculars and telescopes for birding, with some hints on what to look for if you are making a purchase, followed by a question and answer session.

**11:30–11:50 Tim Earl**

**Follow me: life as a tour leader**

An insight into the highs and lows of making dreams come true; the delights, joys and nightmares involved in taking hundreds of people around the world to see wildlife. -

**12:00–12:20 Neil Glenn**

**An introduction to The Gambia**

Sponsored by Gambia Tourism Board

Why The Gambia is an exciting and safe introduction to African birding.

**12:30–12:50 Rob Sheldon**

**Changing hearts and minds through local language field guides**

The Middle East is home to a wonderful array of birds. Key to their continued survival is the need to inspire current and future generations of birdwatchers through local language field guides.

**1:00–1:20 Paul Hackett**

**Digiscoping 4K video and stills, the future?**

Paul will take you through the basics of this format of 4K video scoping and the ability to take stills from the video.

Brown hare



Photo: John Wright



# What's on Saturday 22 August

**1:30–1:50 Jaclyn Pearson**

**Seabird restoration on the Isles of Scilly**

This project is the largest community-based rat-removal project to date. By removing brown rats from St Agnes and Gugh we are protecting seabirds including Manx shearwaters and storm petrels.

**2:00–2:20 Martin Kitching**

**Birding along the Roman Frontier**

From the Tyne to the Solway the route of Hadrian's Wall and the surrounding countryside offers a vast range of birding opportunities.

**2:30–2:50 Trish Forsyth**

**Drive North Queensland – the ultimate self-drive birding destination**

Tropical North Queensland is Australia's premium birding destination and is easy to do on your own.

**3:00–3:20 Colin Cross**

**Gambia Eco-lodge holidays and Kartong Bird Observatory**

Sponsored by Gambia Tourism Board  
Best opportunities for tailored birding itineraries in 'real' Gambia staying in quality eco-lodges.

**3:30–3:50 Angela Hewitt**

**Meadow-making is important**

Angela explains how over eight years she converted an over-improved field into a series of experimental meadows.

**4:00–4:20 Yeray Seminario and Javi Elorriaga**

**Strait of Gibraltar: spectacular migration and much more**

Much more than a world-class raptor migration corridor, the Strait of Gibraltar is a birding hotspot.

**4:30–4:50 Edward Mayer**

**Will the swift survive the 21st century?**

Swifts depend on buildings for apertures in which to breed. Modern buildings are sealed, preventing their breeding, but nest-place creation projects are an answer.

**5:00–5:20 Dr Domingos Leitão**

**An invitation to discover the wildflowers of south Portugal**

South Portugal has a unique and diverse flora; bulbs, orchids, rock-roses, parasitic plants and more.

as much about relationships with the special places that butterflies inhabit.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Matthew's publications.**

**10:30–11:15 Nick Davies**

**Cuckoo: How does nature's most notorious cheat continue to manipulate and trick its hosts?**

Sponsored by Bloomsbury Publishing

The cuckoo, our harbinger of spring, is nature's most notorious cheat. How does it trick its hosts? In this talk, Nick shows how simple field experiments have uncovered an evolutionary arms race.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Nick's publications.**

**11:30–12:15 Sophie Lake**

**Britain's Habitats: A Guide to the Wildlife Habitats of Britain and Ireland**

Sponsored by Princeton WILDGuides

Sophie, professional ecologist, is the co-author of a lavishly illustrated overview of the natural history and conservation landscape of Britain and Ireland.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Sophie's publications.**

**12:30–1:15 Sir John Lister-Kaye**

**A birds eye view of a highland year**

John Lister-Kaye is one of Scotland's best loved naturalists and nature writers; author of 10 books, he has served prominently in RSPB, the NCC and SNH and lectured on wildlife on 3 continents. His latest book is *Gods of the Morning*.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Sir John's publications.**

**1:30–2:15 David Cobham, Mark Avery and Nigel Middleton**

**A Sparrowhawk's Lament– Updated**

Sponsored by WILD Sounds and Books

Peregrine falcons on Norwich Cathedral, marsh harriers at the Hawk and Owl Trust's reserve at Sculthorpe Moor, Norfolk and

hen harriers on The Forest of Bowland – the latest news on these three birds of prey.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed David, Mark and Nigel's publications.**

**2:30–3:15 Charlie Elder**

**Few And Far Between: Tracking down Britain's rarest and most endangered animals**

Sponsored by Bloomsbury Publishing

Author and journalist Charlie Elder describes his adventures over a year spent tracking down Britain's rarest and most endangered birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and insects.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Charlie's publications.**

**3:30–4:15 Dominic Couzens**

**The Crossley ID Guide: Britain and Ireland**

Sponsored by Princeton WILDGuides

Dominic will be talking about his acclaimed guide, co-authored with Richard Crossley. He will talk about identifying birds in their natural habitats using size, structure, shape, probability, and behaviour and how that approach is reflected in the award-winning design of his book.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Dominic's publications.**

**4:30–5:15 Mark Avery and Keith Betton**

**Behind the Binoculars**

Sponsored by Pelagic Publishing

All of us became birdwatchers for different reasons and via different routes. For most of us it has become a lifelong pursuit - and for some it has become a job too. In compiling their book, Mark Avery and Keith Betton set out to discover what makes some of our most acclaimed birdwatchers tick (as it were!).

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Mark and Keith's publications.**

## Authors Forum

Sponsored by WILD Sounds & Books, Princeton WILDGuides and Bloomsbury Publishing



**9:30–10:15 Matthew Oates**

**Adventures with British Butterflies**

Sponsored by Bloomsbury Publishing

Matthew Oates's book *In Pursuit of Butterflies* chronicles the great highs and lows of 50 years spent studying our butterflies. Adventures range from the sublime to the ridiculous. Yet the book is



Tree creeper



Reed bunting

Photos: John Wright





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Marquee 6, Stands 44-45

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Black and Red Broadbills © HUTAN/Jamill Sinyor

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# What's on Sunday 23 August

## All Weekend Events

### Rutland Water Nature Reserves

Don't forget that once you've paid for your entrance to the Birdfair you also have access to the Rutland Water Nature Reserves on the day of your ticket. Make time to go birding and explore Egleton and Lyndon Nature Reserves. On 5 February 2015, Rutland Water Nature Reserve was announced as 'Britain's Favourite Nature Reserve' in the Landlove Magazine awards! More than 25,000 votes were cast from their readers, who took the time to 'vote to help celebrate the very best things about the British countryside and reward the people who stand out to make it so wonderful'. The team here at Rutland Water are thrilled to receive the award, made extra special by the fact that the public decided the winners.

### Birdfair Auction

Every year the Auction Marquee is packed with a fantastic range of donations from Exhibitors, Celebrities and Supporters. Additions arrive throughout the weekend so be sure to visit regularly to see what temptations have been added. A selection appears on pages 62–63 in the programme, but visit our website [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk) for updates right up until the Birdfair weekend. As well as buying your entry ticket, you can support this year's project by being the winning bidder on Auction Lots!

### Birdfair Mural

Protecting migratory birds in the Eastern Mediterranean

The illegal killing of migratory birds has gained considerable attention in the UK in recent months. This year's Birdfair is supporting BirdLife International in securing funding to provide critical leverage for sustaining work on illegal killing in the Eastern Mediterranean. Come and watch some of the UK's finest wildlife artists portray some of these magnificent birds such as the red-footed falcon, sociable lapwing and pallid harrier.

## Events Marquee

(unless otherwise stated)

Sponsored by  
Falkland Islands  
Tourist Board



### 6:30 am Whitwell, Rutland Water David Lindo's Wildlife Cruise

Don't miss this fantastic opportunity exclusive to the Birdfair with The Urban Birder – David Lindo! He will be hosting this Wildlife Cruise on board the Rutland Belle and will be joined by a member of the Rutland Osprey Project team, ensuring that you have the chance to see an array of wildlife from the water.

Places are limited so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets: adults £25, children (16 and under) £15.

Book on our website [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk)

### 9:30–10:0 Sunday Christian Service with A Rocha

A celebration of God's creation, led by A Rocha – Christians in Conservation.

### 10:15–10:45

#### Johnny Kingdom 'Exmoor Escapades'

A light-hearted 'Life of Johnny Kingdom' style event where he will enchant you with photos, film and anecdotes from his life in the wild.

**Johnny will be signing copies of his books on the WILD Sounds & Books stand M3/49–53 from 11:00 for approximately 30 minutes.**

### 11:00–11:45

#### Jonathan and Angie Scott – Mara-Serengeti: A Photographer's Paradise

Come and enjoy some outstanding wildlife imagery from the place that Jonathan and Angie call their second home as they share stories of their work with big cats in the Masai Mara and follow the migration of wildebeest and zebras through the Serengeti.

**Jonathan and Angie will be signing copies of their books on the Swarovski stand after their event.**

### 12:00–12:45

#### Martin Hughes-Games 'A Wild Life'

A highly entertaining account of 30 years' travelling the world to film wildlife including polar bears, man-eating tigers and killer crocodiles – as well as jumping out of balloons with speeding peregrine falcons, offering himself to hungry vampire bats and getting into bed with exceedingly venomous giant centipedes.

**Martin will be signing copies of A Wild Life after the next event, Birdless Pointbrain, on the WILD Sounds & Books stand M3/49–53 from 2:00 pm for approximately 45 minutes.**

### 1:00–1:45

#### Birdless Pointbrain chaired by Nigel Redman, assisted by Neil Glenn

The popular television quiz show *Pointless* gets a unique Birdfair makeover and makes its debut this year. Celebrity contestants paired with regular birders compete for the stunning and utterly pointless Birdless Pointbrain 'trophy' and short-lived Birdfair stardom. The four hopeful celebrities are Mike Dilger, Nick Baker, Martin Hughes-Games and Stephen Moss.

**Martin, Mike, Nick, Nigel, Neil and Stephen will be signing copies of their books on the WILD Sounds & Books stand M3/49–53 from 2:00 pm for approximately 45 minutes.**

### 2:00–2:45

#### Simon King 'My World of Wildlife'

Sponsored by Simon King Wildlife

From sniffing spraint to pestering politicians – Simon King reflects on life as a naturalist, conservationist and wildlife film maker.

**Simon will be signing autographs in the Simon King Wildlife Marquee sponsored by Carl Zeiss Ltd 3:00–3:30.**

### 3:00–3:45

#### The Wildlife Trusts present: Julia Donaldson's The Gruffalo

'...He has purple prickles all over his back. Oh help! Oh, no! IT'S...'...Bill Oddie?

Join your favourite Birdfair faces in their performance of *The Gruffalo*. Mummy Squirrel (Lucy McRobert) tells of a courageous mouse (Mike Dilger), a sibilant snake (Nick Baker), cunning fox (Rob Lambert) and peckish owl (Dominic Couzens), as they confront the creature living in the deep, dark wood: the Gruffalo (otherwise known as Bill Oddie)! This classic story will delight children and adults alike.

### 4:00–4:45

#### Dr Helen Roy 'Where the wild things are...'

Sponsored by Biological Records Centre (part of the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)

People across Britain have been fascinated with where the 'wild things' are for centuries. Observations, so-called 'biological records', have been critical to our understanding of biodiversity. New technologies are making it easier than ever to get involved with recording wildlife. You'll have an opportunity to meet some of the 'wild things' and see how your wildlife contributions can make a difference.

## Lecture Marquee 1

Sponsored  
by Speyside  
Wildlife



### 9:30–9:50 Nicola Williamson

#### Saving a bird on the brink: turtle dove conservation from Suffolk to Senegal

Turtle dove numbers in the UK are currently halving every six years. Nicola gives an update about research and conservation action across their flyway.

### 10:00–10:2 Keith Betton

#### Cranes and Champagne in France

In the Champagne region, Lac du Der is 120 miles from Paris and holds the largest number of wintering common cranes in Europe – 33,000 last year, increasing to 60,000 during migration.

### 10:30–10:50 Manuel Sánchez

#### Travelling through the endemic bird areas in Ecuador in search of Neotropical specialties

Ecuador is the starting point for birding in the Tropical Andes. This talk focuses on the country's birding routes, designed to enjoy endemic birds of the Neotropics.

### 11:00–11:20 Nick Acheson

#### Spitsbergen – land of the polar bear

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A wildlife journey around the Arctic island of Spitsbergen, home to polar bears, walrus and millions of breeding seabirds.



# What's on Sunday 23 August

**11:30–11:50 Barrie Cooper**

**Guatemala: land of the quetzals and Mayans**

This Central American country is rich in wildlife and history. Birds such as resplendent quetzal and pink-headed warbler are relatively easy to see. Mayan pyramids are great places to see wildlife.

**12:00–12:20 Duncan Macdonald**

**Cairngorm's tales – wild stories from an ancient landscape**

Sponsored by Speyside Wildlife

Over hundreds of years the wildlife, landscape and people of the Cairngorms have inspired a wealth of stories.

**12:30–12:50 Hugh Warwick**

Hedgehogs and HedgehogStreet, why connectivity matters.

Hedgehogs are in trouble: numbers are declining rapidly. We need a more connected landscape to keep them from becoming stories and memories.

**1:00–1:20 Nick Acheson**

**Big cat quest**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

In 2015 Naturetrek tour leader Nick Acheson has set himself an unusual challenge: to see all of the world's big cats in a single year, plus as many of the small cats as possible.

**1:30–1:50 David Lindo**

**Urban birding in Extremadura**

Most people who visit this amazing region of Spain zap straight out into the wilderness to see speciality birds like great bustard eagle and pin-tailed sandgrouse. But there is a great array of species to be seen in the urban areas of Cáceres, Merida, Trujillo and Badajoz.

**David will be signing copies of his books Tales from Concrete Jungles and Urban Birder on the WILD Sounds & Books stand M3/49-53 from 2:00 for approximately 30 minutes.**

**2:00–2:20 Julian Sykes**

**Spain's top 20!**

Sponsored by Speyside Wildlife

Having lived in Valencia for over 10 years and guided there for most of that time, Julian invites you to see his personal top 20 species found in the Iberian Peninsula.

**2:30–2:50 Sergio Arias**

**Costa Rica's birding hotspots**

Discover the top locations for birding in Costa Rica; learn about the key ecosystems and the particular species to find there. Take notes of the best reserves and lodges.

**3:00–3:20 Andy Tucker**

**Ecuador – birds and wildlife in the Andes and Amazon of Ecuador**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A journey from the lowland rainforest to the roof of the Andes, looking for a wealth of birdlife, mammals, amphibians and spectacular scenery.

**3:30–3:50 Roy Atkins**

**The endemics of Dreamland!**

Sponsored by Speyside Wildlife

Roy talks through the bizarre problems that arise when recording a dream list. Crazy stories, extraordinary birds and lots of laughs.

**4:00–4:20 Steve Lovell**

**The National Parks of northern Tanzania: much more than Kilimanjaro**

Tanzania is a truly amazing place – yes, the big five, but much more besides. A vast array of birds and mammals of all shapes and sizes.

**4:30–4:50 Margaret Carr**

**Penguins, albatross and shags of the Falklands**

Millions of penguins nest in the Falkland Islands each summer, with thousands of albatross, petrels and shags. Margaret will look at the different species and describe Falkland Conservation's latest projects.

## Lecture Marquee 2

Sponsored by Heatherlea and Argentina



National Institute of Tourism Promotion

**9:30–9:50 Balazs Szigeti**

**Birds, stunning landscapes and medieval cities of Slovenia and Croatia**

A fantastic combination of great birding, breath-taking Alpine and coastal landscapes and beautiful old cities. Wildlife includes brown bear, rock partridge, butterflies and orchids.

**10:00–10:20 Tbc**

**Birdwatching experiences in Argentina**

Sponsored by Argentina National Institute of Tourism Promotion

Discover 80 bird families including 20 endemic Neotropical species and 16 local endemic species, going from the Andes or the Patagonia to Litoral wetlands and Iguazú Waterfalls.

**10:30–10:50 Richard Parsons**

**Birds of north-western Ecuador: a kaleidoscope of avian diversity and beauty**

Join us on a journey of avian discovery through the mysterious cloud forests of north-western Ecuador. Meet some of the toucans, quetzals, antpittas and more that make this beautiful region their home!

**11:00–11:20 Toby Green**

**Scotland's best birding in just three days**

Sponsored by Heatherlea

Ideal for busy birders who want to round-up Scotland's special birds in just a few days!

**11:30–11:50 Mark Carter**

**Birding and wildlife in the Australian Outback**

Sponsored by Australia's Northern Territory

The famous town of Alice Springs in the Australia's Red Centre is the hub of Outback birdwatching adventures. Budgie flocks, giant lizards, rare grasswrens and stunning scenery make it one of the best wildlife locations in Australasia.



Simon King



Johnny Kingdom



Jonathan and Angie Scott



Martin Hughes-Games



# What's on Sunday 23 August

**12:00–12:20 Paul Stanbury**

## **The wildlife of Zambia's South Luangwa Valley**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A safari to one of Africa's finest wildlife reserves – home to colourful colonies of carmine bee-eaters, plus lions, wild dogs and many other species.

**12.30–12:50 Tony Williams**

## **The birds you want to see in France**

At the 2014 Birdfair we asked what species you wanted to see in France and where you go to see them. Here are the results coupled with how to find what you want to see.

**1:00–1:20 Ian Ford**

## **Panama – the new Costa Rica!**

Sponsored by Heatherlea

Panama made simple, on a relaxed tour full of rare and colourful birds. If you have been to Costa Rica, we know you will love Panama!

**1:30–1:50 Irshad Mabarak**

## **Malaysia: an ecological hotspot**

Sponsored by Malaysia Tourism

When it comes to what is on land and in the ocean Malaysia is truly The Greatest Show on Earth!

**2:00–2:20 Tbc**

## **The wings of the end of the world**

Sponsored by Argentina National Institute of Tourism Promotion

At just 620 miles from the Antarctica, where the Atlantic and Pacific oceans merge into inclement seas, the world's end is definitely a kingdom of beautiful birds!

**2:30–2:50 Harald Grabenhofer**

## **Nationalpark Neusiedler See – Seewinkel, Austria – a dry wetland?**

The water levels at this Austrian birding hotspot can be very different from year to year – what does that mean for the birds of the region?

**3:00–3:20 Nick Acheson**

## **The wildlife of Madagascar**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

The lemurs, birds and other unique wildlife of Madagascar. Isolated from mainland Africa for over 100 million years, Madagascar has taken its own evolutionary course.

**3:30–3:50 Martin Beaton**

## **Weddell Island – a Falkland Islands wildlife venue**

Sponsored by Falkland Islands Tourist Board

Why are increasing numbers of birders making the trek south to the Falkland Islands? An insight into a wildlife island and the variety of unique wildlife experiences to be found.

**4:00–4:20 Ignacio Yufra**

## **Photographing birds in Morocco**

Tips, strategies, and locations to photograph Morocco's most iconic birds.

**4:30–4:50 Damon Bridge**

## **Trans-locating cranes to the West Country – The Great Crane Project**

The first common crane translocation project in the world – benefits the local landscape, wildlife, and communities.

## Lecture Marquee 3

Sponsored

by Aigas,  
Field Centre  
and Tribes Travel



**9:30–9:50 Mike Read**

## **The Vercors and the Pyrenees – 'Alpine' flower photography at its best**

For wild orchids, gentians and other flowers, plus landscapes, it is hard to beat these French locations.

**10:00–10:20 Marc Gálvez and Vanesa Palacios**

## **Lonely Birder – where to eat and sleep when you go birding around the world**

Sponsored by Extremadura

Lonely Birder is a unique website recommending places to stay, eat and purchase birdwatching products and services in the birding hotspots of Spain and elsewhere.

**10:30–10:50 Dan Free**

## **Kazakhstan – Birding the mountains and deserts of central Asia**

Sponsored by Naturetrek

A journey across the varied landscapes of Kazakhstan, in search of the region's avian highlights.

**11:00–11:20 Warwick Lister-Kaye**

## **Winter wolves of Yellowstone National Park**

Sponsored by Aigas Field Centre

A search through pristine winter wilderness for Yellowstone's famous reintroduced wolves.

**11:30–11:50 Guy Marks**

## **Discovering Costa Rica**

Sponsored by Tribes Travel

The wildlife highlights of Costa Rica, discovering some very special places from the Caribbean to the Pacific coast.

**12:00–12:20 John Kinghorn**

## **The Southern African Big Year – my 365-day quest for 800 species of bird**

Five countries, 365 days; 2014 saw John Kinghorn attempt to break the record for the youngest person to record 800 species in a calendar year.

**12:30–12:50 Dr Toni Shepard of The League Against Cruel Sports**

## **The hunting ban – 10 years on**

Sponsored by WILD Sounds and Books

Hunting foxes, deer and hares with dogs was banned in Britain a decade ago. What do the next 10 years hold?

**1:00–1:20 Lucy Babey**

## **Survey for whales and dolphins around the UK with ORCA**

Get involved in whale and dolphin conservation and join a Marine Mammal Surveyor training course.

**1:30–1:50 Frank McClintock**

## **How to build a hide on the 'cheep'**

Frank explains how to plan, site and build a hide for wildlife observation or photography.

**2:00–2:20 Guy Marks**

## **Wildlife of the Pantanal and Amazon, Brazil**

Sponsored by Tribes Travel

The biodiversity of the Brazilian Amazon, the famous wetland of the Pantanal, including how to see the jaguar.

**2:30–2:50 Andy Clements**

## **Unravelling the mysteries of migration**

The latest from the BTO's programme of migrant bird tracking work.

**3:00–3:20 Sir John Lister-Kaye**

## **The invertebrate crisis**

Sponsored by Aigas Field Centre

A look at modern farming techniques that have devastated bees, butterflies and bugs.

**3:30–3:50 David Horwell**

## **Galapagos; a visitors' guide to these enchanted islands**

How to get to there, why they are so special, ways of visiting, animal and bird life, conservation.

**4:00–4:20 Ron McCombe**

## **Wild Mull**

An intimate look at the Isle of Mull, which Ron visits several times each year to photograph its magnificent wildlife.

**4:30–4:50 Richard Costin**

## **A year in review**

Showcasing Richard's best work from the last year, explaining his process of self-improvement and how you can do the same.

## AWBC Lectures

Sponsored by Gambia  
Tourism Board



**10:00–10:20 Simon Phelps**

## **Wildlife in Trust: butterflies, bugs and assorted beasts**

A glimpse of some of the UK's most unusual and under-appreciated invertebrates, where to spot them and conservation efforts by The Wildlife Trusts.

**10:30–10:50 Chris Naylor**

## **Postcards from the Middle East**

Despite distressing news from the Middle East, Chris reveals a very different reality: of generous, vibrant cultures, extraordinary wildlife and, yes, modern challenges for conservation.

**11:00–11:20 Matt Williams**

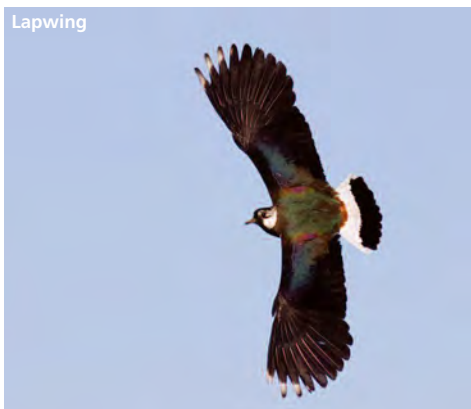
## **Vision for nature: birds and wildlife need a youth movement**

Wildlife declines will be felt sharply by today's youth. How is A Focus On Nature working to change this, and how do young people want the natural world to look in 2050?



# What's on Sunday 23 August

Lapwing



Buff-tip moth



Kestrel



Photos: John Wright

**11:30–11:50 Gerard Gorman**

## **Tracks and signs**

Find, follow and identify the tracks & signs that Europe's wildlife leaves for – trails, prints, droppings, pellets, dens.

Gerard will be signing copies of his books including *Tracks and Signs*, *Woodpeckers of the World* and *Birding in Eastern Europe* on the WILD Sounds & Books stand M3/49–53 from 12:00 for approximately 30 minutes.

**12:00–12:20 Neil Glenn**

## **An introduction to The Gambia**

Sponsored by Gambia Tourism Board

Why The Gambia is an exciting and safe introduction to African birding.

**12:30–12:50 Bob Ford**

## **The weird wildlife of Portland**

The Isle of Portland lies just off the coast of Dorset. It is home to 15,000 people – and a unique community of plants and animals.

**1:00–1:20 Lawrence Bee**

## **False widows and distinguished jumpers**

An introduction to the world of British spiders – dispelling the myths and revealing the true story of their fascinating lives.

**1:30–1:50 Marcos Lacasa**

## **The moult pattern of lammergeier of Pyrenees population**

Previous studies have focused on the colour of the moult, but the key is the pattern rather than colour. Aragon has the best lammergeier population in Europe and we want to show where this species can be watched.

**2:00–2:20 Colin Cross**

## **Gambia Eco-lodge holidays and Kartong Bird Observatory**

Sponsored by Gambia Tourism Board

The best opportunities for tailored birding itineraries in 'real' Gambia, staying in quality eco-lodges, birding with experienced guides.

**2:30–2:50 Chris Breen**

## **A world of whale watching**

A pole to pole tour highlighting the most notable and accessible areas to see these wonderful mammals.

**3:00–3:20 Martin Kelsey**

## **Top 10 Birding sites in Extremadura**

Sponsored by Extremadura

A personal selection of the 10 best sites for visiting birders to explore and enjoy.

**3:30–3:50 Mike Read**

## **Corsica – mountains in the Mediterranean**

Birds such as Corsican nuthatch, Corsican finch and golden eagles are found in the mountains while spring can bring a wealth of migrant.

**4:00–4:20 Ian Thomson**

## **Scotland's raptors – just how are they doing?**

Scotland is a great place to see birds of prey, but are its raptors thriving? What challenges lie ahead?

**4:30–4:50 Stephen Le Quesne**

## **Sumatra: the new front line in conservation**

During 2014 Stephen travelled to Sumatra to join two organisations that have the fate of the Sumatran orangutan in their hands.

## Authors Forum

Sponsored by WILD Sounds & Books, Princeton WILDGuides and Bloomsbury Publishing



**9:30–10:15 Ruth Miller and Alan Davies**  
**The Joy of Birdwatching**

Sponsored by Summersdale

A fast-paced miscellany of fascinating bird facts, intriguing bird information and spectacular bird sights from around the world.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Ruth and Alan's publications.**

**10:30–11:15 Dave Smallshire**

**Britain's Dragonflies: A Field Guide to the Damselflies and Dragonflies of Britain and Ireland**

Sponsored by Princeton WILDGuides

Finding, identifying, recording and photographing these beautiful creatures.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Dave's publications.**

**11:30–12:15 Dominic Couzens**

## **Tales of Remarkable Birds – How Birds Stretch Credulity**

Sponsored by Bloomsbury Publishing

Recent studies have shown that birds are smarter, stronger and overwhelmingly more sophisticated than we ever imagined.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Dominic's publications.**

**12:30–1:15 Dave Goulson**

## **Saving our bumblebees**

Sponsored by WILD Sounds and Books

Bumblebees are amongst the most fascinating and endearing of insects, but some bumblebees and other pollinators are in decline, threatening pollination of crops and wildflowers. What we can do to help ensure a future for the bumblebee?

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Dave's publications.**

**1:30–2:15 Sarah Woods**

## **On a wing and a prayer: one woman's quest to find the harpy eagle**

Sponsored by Bloomsbury Publishing

Sarah Woods will be in conversation with Jamie Wyver. In her quest was to catch sight of one of the few last breeding pairs of harpy eagles, Sarah survived landslides, crash landings, floods and culture clashes!

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Sarah's publications.**

**2:30–3:15 Stuart Ball**

## **Britain's Hoverflies: A Field Guide**

Sponsored by Princeton WILDGuides

People recognise hoverflies as wasp- or bee-like flies in the garden whose larvae eat greenfly. There are actually over 280 species in Britain and only a few are mimics or have aphid-eating larvae.

**Followed by the opportunity to purchase and have signed Stuart's publications.**

**3:30–4:00 Suchit Basnet**

## **After the Earthquake: Wildlife-watching in Nepal**

A major earthquake struck Nepal in April. Suchit Basnet, introduces the wonderful wildlife of Koshi, Kathmandu, Chitwan and Suklaphanta ... and explains how wildlife tourism can help his country.



# trinidad & tobago

...is one of the richest birding countries per square mile in the world.

With over 430 recorded species of birds, Trinidad and Tobago offers some of the best bird-watching in the Caribbean. Tobago is home to over 200 species such as the Red-Crowned Woodpecker, the White-tailed Sabrewing, the Red-Billed Tropic Bird and the national bird of Tobago, the Cocrico. Unique species such as the Tobago variants of the Red-legged Honeycreeper and Blue-grey Tanager are a must-see for enthusiasts.

Trinidad and Tobago's proximity to the South American continent means that birdwatchers have the opportunity to spy both Caribbean and South American birds. With landscapes transcending from tropical rainforests, swamps to scrubland, luscious parks and hotel gardens, a wide range of species are easily accessible. A few carefully placed sugar-water feeders will attract the yellow and black Bananaquit, or Sugarbird, whilst other smaller birds to be seen include the Mot-Mot and the Copper-Rumped Hummingbird.

Forest birds such as the White-Bearded Manakin and the Rufous-Breasted Hermit can be found in the ridgeland to the centre of the island, whilst coastal birds include the Frigate birds and brown pelicans.

No matter the level of your knowledge or experience, even if you just have a passing interest in the beautiful birds around your hotel grounds, you will definitely find Tobago to be a real paradise of birdlife.

Email: [trinbago@amgltd.biz](mailto:trinbago@amgltd.biz) for more information or visit [gotrinidadandtobago.com](http://gotrinidadandtobago.com) and [tobagostyle.travel](http://tobagostyle.travel)







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Marquee 6  
Stand 10/11/12



## Bird Fair Special Offer with MotMot Travel

12 nights Trinidad & Tobago Tour

**From only £1,695pp\***

Call 01327 359622 - [www.motmottravel.com](http://www.motmottravel.com)

\*Terms and Conditions apply



# Family Fun

Come and have a go at the many activities suitable for families and children

## RSPB Wildlife Explorers

### Bug Hunts

Friday – Sunday: 10:30, 12:15, 14:15 and 15:45

### Pond dipping Safari:

Friday – Sunday: 10:00, 11:45, 14:15 and 15:45

Do you know a budding conservationist who would like to have a career in conservation?

If so, come and meet the teenagers from the RSPB Phoenix Forum and find how!



Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)

## Focus On Nature - Kid's Art Mural

Back for the third year by popular demand, A Focus On Nature, the network for young nature conservationists in the UK, will be asking young people at Birdfair to paint a picture or write their 'Vision for Nature' on their lovely art mural. All skill levels welcome – just bring your creativity and imagination with you! Children will also have the chance to send a postcard to their MP, telling them that they care about nature and asking them to do their bit to protect wildlife over the next five (or 50!) years.



David Klaer (rspb-images.com)





Want to get your hands messy and your garden full of bugs and beasties? Then head over to the **Anglian Water** stand to learn how to improve your patch for wildlife and get stuck in making boxes for bats, bugs and birds, including some creature crafts to boost your wildlife creations!



## Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife trusts present *The Gruffalo*

On Sunday 23 August, 15:00, in the Events Marquee, as part of The Wildlife Trusts' celebration of nature writing, a host of your Birdfair favourites will be starring in an amateur production of everyone's favourite children's book, Julia Donaldson's *The Gruffalo*! With guests stars including Dominic Couzens, Mike Dilger,

Nick Baker and Rob Lambert, and Bill Oddie as the Gruffalo himself, this promises to delight children and adults alike. We'll be looking for lots of Baby Squirrels to tell the story to, so round off your Birdfair weekend with this family-friendly and enjoyable performance.



## On The Wildlife Trusts stand (OD3)

This year, The Wildlife Trusts will be hosting a celebration of nature writing on their stand, including fun quizzes, competitions, activities for all ages and readings from your favourite nature books - old and new - from some of your favourite wildlife celebs (again, old and new), so come on

down to our enchanted forest and get stuck in. Nature and books have been linked for over 200 years in the UK, and we'll be celebrating our favourite nature-related words: whether you're feeling 'crepuscular', have a long 'proboscis' or enjoy a good 'murmuration', we'd love to see you!

**We look forward to seeing you!**



# Birdfair Auction 2015

This is the Birdfair Auction's eleventh year and, thanks to the overwhelming generosity of our exhibitors and visitors, to date we have raised over £125,000 for vital conservation projects.

Exhibitors and celebrities have kindly given a wealth of super items over the years, from art prints and coveted books to optics equipment or once-in-a-lifetime birding holidays. This year is no exception. Once again, our exhibitors and celebrities have excelled themselves and we are delighted to have a selection of fantastic lots on offer.

Don't miss out! Make sure to visit us on the Auction Stand and join in the fun way to fundraise for bird conservation.

In the meantime, please visit our website [www.birdfair.org.uk](http://www.birdfair.org.uk) for a more detailed list as new items are donated regularly.

Key: T&C = Terms and conditions apply.

## Lot 1

Framed print. Limited edition artist's original linocut print by Lisa Hooper: 'Badger'.

Value £195  
Courtesy of Lisa Hooper, Hoopoe Prints AM/33  
[www.hoopoeprints.co.uk](http://www.hoopoeprints.co.uk)

## Lot 2

Complete series of Britain's Wildlife. Princeton/WildGuides is pleased to offer a full 12-book set of the WildGuides series, including *Dragonflies, Butterflies, Hoverflies, Freshwater Fishes, Reptiles & Amphibians, Sea Mammals, Day-flying Moths, Plant Galls, Arable Plants, Arable Bryophytes, Orchids, and Habitats*.

Value £230  
Courtesy of University Press Group (Princeton/WildGuides) M5/36  
[www.press.princeton.edu/wildguides](http://www.press.princeton.edu/wildguides)

## Lot 3

VEO 235AP Travel Tripod. Dedicated to photographers and birdwatchers who love to travel, The VEO Collection has introduced a travel tripod with a pan-head that offers a super lightweight and compact option – perfect for your spotting scope or camera.

Value £150  
Courtesy of Vanguard World UK Ltd OD/13  
[www.vanguardworld.co.uk](http://www.vanguardworld.co.uk)

## Lot 4

Watering Can Bird Box. It is made from beautiful English oak and can be personalised if required. It will make a great enhancement to any garden and great home for the birds.

Value £150  
Courtesy of Out of the Woodwork OD/10  
[www.outofthewoodwork.co.uk](http://www.outofthewoodwork.co.uk)

## Lot 5

Standard day Guide in the Cairngorms National Park. A tailored day out for up to six guests with one of our expert guides. Transport is included. T&C.

Value £160  
Courtesy of Speyside Wildlife, Marquee 7 Stands 21 & 22  
[www.speysidewildlife.co.uk](http://www.speysidewildlife.co.uk)

## Lot 6

Swarovski 8 x 32 EL Swarovision Binoculars. Lightweight, compact and

essential – Swarovision technology means maximum contrast, a virtually even image, maximum colour fidelity and 100% field of view. Perfect for anyone who desires exceptional technology in a smaller binocular.

Value £1,600  
Courtesy of Swarovski Optik, OD/16  
[www.uk.swarovskioptik.com](http://www.uk.swarovskioptik.com)

## Lot 7

Pack of 10 Greeting cards. Comprising five African birds and five African mammals. The images were taken by Jo Latham on trips run by Birding Africa and Limosa Holidays.

Value £20  
Courtesy of Jo Latham, of Limosa Holidays M7/46,47  
[www.wildlifephotocards.co.uk](http://www.wildlifephotocards.co.uk)

## Lot 8

20" x 16" mounted and framed photograph of a Barn Owl.

Value £50  
Courtesy of Our Wild Life M3/54  
[www.ourwildlifephotography.com](http://www.ourwildlifephotography.com)

## Lot 9

Gardenature High Resolution Colour Nest Box Camera System. This high quality cedar bird box with camera is ready assembled and easy to set up straight to your TV – a great way to observe the secret lives of nesting birds.

Value £100  
Courtesy of Gardenature Limited, M3/31,32  
[www.gardenature.co.uk](http://www.gardenature.co.uk)

## Lot 10

Use of the EB5 large carnivore hide in Bieszczadt mountains, Baligrod, Poland. Transport to/from Baligrod town square, free entrance for two persons (two nights). T&C.

Value £320  
Courtesy of Europe's Big5, M7/30  
[www.europesbig5.com](http://www.europesbig5.com)

## Lot 11

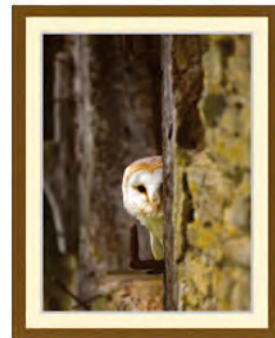
Puffins – made from coloured glass, worked freehand in a blow-torch with no painting involved! This is a unique piece which will never be replicated, made exclusively for the Birdfair 2015 Auction.

Value £80  
Courtesy of D Smith Glasscraft M3/21

## Lot 3



## Lot 8



## Lot 12

Two seats on 10-day Northern Highlights Tour. On an authentic mobile tented safari visiting Moremi Game Reserve, Khwai Concession and Savuti Marsh in Chobe National Park including game drive activities, mokoro (dug-out canoe) excursion and boat cruise. T&C.

Value £6,900  
Courtesy of Letaka Safaris M7/58  
[www.letakasafaris.com](http://www.letakasafaris.com)

## Lot 13

Ulva Island Birds & Forest Guided Walk – half day. Our iconic guided walk on Ulva Island is a must do! Look out for penguins on the short boat ride; walk easy tracks through primeval rainforest; enjoy close views of the rare and endangered birds. T&C.

Value £140  
Courtesy of Ruggedy Range Wilderness Experience  
[www.ruggedyrange.com](http://www.ruggedyrange.com)

## Lot 14

Framed Art Print. Framed, signed and numbered limited edition giclee print of 'Beachcombers', a painting of Sanderlings, by Chris Rose.

Value £180  
Courtesy of Chris Rose Wildlife Artist AM/34  
[www.chrisrose-artist.co.uk](http://www.chrisrose-artist.co.uk)

## Lot 15

Paterson Inlet Wildlife Cruise, Stuart Island. This 2.5 hour cruise offers superb all-round viewing with great photo opportunities including: penguins, shore birds and the possibility of mollymawks, bottle-nosed dolphins and other marine life. Our guides provide commentary on the birds, marine life, geography and history of the Inlet. T&C.

Value £135  
Courtesy of Ruggardy Range Wildlife Experiences  
[www.ruggardyrange.com](http://www.ruggardyrange.com)  
[www.aihe.co.nz](http://www.aihe.co.nz)

## Lot 16

Red-backed Shrike. A unique wood carving of the red-listed bird, carved and painted by award-winning carver David Askew.

Value £250  
Courtesy of British Decoy & Wildfowl

Carvers Association (BDWCA), AM/29,30  
[www.bdwca.org.uk](http://www.bdwca.org.uk)

## Lot 17

One year's subscription to Bird Watching Magazine – Britain's best-selling birdwatching magazine, delivering 13 issues straight to your door!

Value £50  
Courtesy of Bird Watching Magazine, M6/36,37  
[www.birdwatching.co.uk](http://www.birdwatching.co.uk)

## Lot 18

Holiday in the Kanha Tiger Reserve for two people. Spend a week in the finest lodge in this reserve in Central India; all accommodation and meals for two are included. T&C.

Value £1,820  
Courtesy of Enchanted India, M6/18  
[www.enchantedindia.com](http://www.enchantedindia.com)

## Lot 19

Original painting of a highland cow. A beautiful depiction of this charismatic animal, original painting by Angela Hewitt.

Value £95  
Courtesy of Angela Hewitt Originals, AM/41  
[www.angelaheewitt.co.uk](http://www.angelaheewitt.co.uk)

## Lot 20

A pelagic day trip from Cape Town, South Africa. Birding Africa, in association with Cape Town Pelagics, are offering a guided pelagic trip for one person from Cape Town (subject to availability). T&C.

Value £130  
Courtesy of Birding Africa and Cape Town Pelagics, M3/29  
[www.capetownpelagics.com](http://www.capetownpelagics.com)

## Lot 21

Birds of Paradise: Revisiting the World's Most Extraordinary Birds. Cornell Lab of Ornithology are donating this hard cover, 228-page book about the epic quest of adventure and discovery of the 39 unique species of Birds-of-Paradise in New Guinea.

Value £30  
Courtesy of Cornell Lab of Ornithology, M3/6,7  
[www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu)

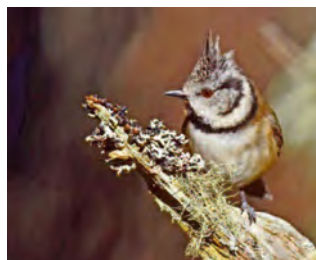
## Lot 1



## Lot 4



## Lot 5



## Lot 7





Lot 10



Lot 11



Lot 14



Lot 17



**Lot 22**  
Two nights for up to four people staying in St. Monica's Cottage, Eggleton, Rutland. This beautiful thatched cottage can be yours – to be taken before 1 May 2016 with the possibility of extra nights – arranged directly with the owner. T&C. Value £240  
Courtesy of St. Monica's Cottage  
[www.facebook.com/pages/Rutland-Holiday-Cottage/109867579055086?ref=ts](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Rutland-Holiday-Cottage/109867579055086?ref=ts)

**Lot 23**  
Large packet of native wild flower seeds – to compliment Angela's talk on her wild flower meadow. Value £25  
Courtesy of Angela Hewitt Originals, AM/41  
[www.angelaheiwitt.co.uk](http://www.angelaheiwitt.co.uk)

**Lot 24**  
A week's accommodation at Paradise in Portugal. One week's B&B accommodation at Quinta do Barranco da Estrada – winner of Tripadvisor's 'Travellers' Choice' award two years running, and the head office of Birding in Portugal. T&C. Value £580  
Courtesy of Birding in Portugal, M2/90,91  
[www.birdinginportugal.com](http://www.birdinginportugal.com)

**Lot 25**  
Lowe Scope Photo Travel 350 AW. The Scope Photo Travel 350 AW is a modular backpack designed to offer protection and flexibility. It is purpose-built of lightweight, yet rugged and weather-resistant materials. Value £100  
Courtesy of DayMen International Ltd.

Lot 19



Lot 20



Lot 21

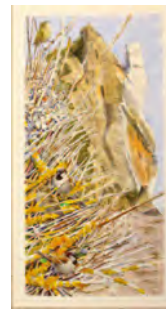


Lot 25



Lowe Scope will be at OD/7  
[www.lovepro.co.uk](http://www.lovepro.co.uk)  
**Lot 26**  
20kg Premier Plus Birdseed & Eyebrook Goody Bag. A sack of our quality wheat free mix produced on our award-winning conservation farm, and also a goody bag of feeders, suets and worms for your garden birds to enjoy! Value £45  
Courtesy of Eyebrook Wild Bird Feeds, M6/19  
[www.eyebrookbirdfeeds.co.uk](http://www.eyebrookbirdfeeds.co.uk)  
**Lot 27**  
Original watercolour painting. 'House Sparrows and Chiffchaff at Branscombe beach, Devon' is an original painting by Mike Warren. Value £300  
Courtesy of Mike Warren, AM/55  
[www.mikewarren.co.uk](http://www.mikewarren.co.uk)  
**Lot 28**  
Wild Herzegovina Birdwatching Holiday. A UK-based company offering all-inclusive birdwatching holidays to Herzegovina. The holiday will visit different habitats each day, to enable you to see a wide range of birds in varying environments. T&C. Value £925  
Courtesy of Wild Herzegovina Ltd, M6/15  
[www.wild-herzegovina.com](http://www.wild-herzegovina.com)  
**Lot 29**  
Paramo Poncho – essential and practical rain protection for warm climates. The Poncho sheds a tropical downpour effectively, providing maximum ventilation, minimum insulation and weighs only 320g.

Lot 27



Lot 29



Lot 31



Lot 32

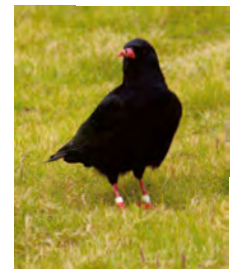


Value £80  
Courtesy of Paramo Directional Clothing Systems Ltd, M2/69,70,71  
[www.paramo.co.uk](http://www.paramo.co.uk)  
**Lot 30**  
10 night multi-location adventure with Inkterra in Peru. A great way to discover Peru's ornithology richness and biodiversity. Full itinerary available on the Birdfair website. T&C. Value USD5,360  
Courtesy of Inkterra, M7/4  
**Lot 31**  
Vortex 'Razor HD' 50mm 'scope with 11-33x50 eyepiece and case – a true quality just 700 gram travel 'scope. Tested in 'Birdwatch' as 'I almost cannot fault the Razor 50 HD'. Value £649  
Courtesy of Vortex@Newpro, M1/1,2  
[www.newprouk.co.uk](http://www.newprouk.co.uk)  
**Lot 32**  
Framed print of a pair of gannets entitled 'True Love'. Photographer Steve Race is donating a framed copy – which was the '2013 Wild Wildlife Photographer of the Year 'Commended' award. Value £100.  
Courtesy of Yorkshire Coast Nature, M3/35  
[www.yorkshirecoastnature.co.uk](http://www.yorkshirecoastnature.co.uk)  
**Lot 33**  
One Year Premium Subscription to the Bird Journal Service. This service, with seamless cross-device synchronization puts international birds and wildlife in the palm of your hand. All your observations, photos and analysis available instantly on

Lot 33



Lot 34



Lot 35



Lot 36



your phone, tablet and computer. Value £35  
Courtesy of Bird Journal, M5/39  
[www.birdjournal.com](http://www.birdjournal.com)  
**Lot 34**  
A day guided birdwatching in North Wales with Ruth Miller and Alan Davies plus signed copies of *The Joy of Birdwatching* and *The Biggest Twitch* books. Voucher for two people on an exclusive custom day, minimum 8 hours on a date to be agreed. Valid for 12 months. T&C. Value £167  
Courtesy of Birdwatching Trips and The Biggest Twitch  
[www.birdwatchingtrips.co.uk](http://www.birdwatchingtrips.co.uk)  
**Lot 35**  
Vote National Bird Campaign t-shirts. David Lindo 'The Urban Birder' has donated a 'Vote National Bird Campaign' t-shirt and two commemorative t-shirts of the nation's favourite bird – the robin. Value £60  
Courtesy of David Lindo, M/16  
[www.theurbanbirder.com](http://www.theurbanbirder.com)  
**Lot 36**  
Golden Eagle Portrait. A wonderful image taken in northern Sweden in late afternoon light in February 2015 – at a distance of eight metres in an outside temperature of -25! Value £95  
Courtesy of Ron McCombe Wildlife Photographer, M6/29  
[www.wildlife-photography.uk.com](http://www.wildlife-photography.uk.com)



# A-Z of exhibitors

This is your alphabetical listing, for quick reference, to find out who will be at Birdfair 2015 and how you can contact them. For information on exhibitors by category, please turn to pages 75 and 78. If you want to find a particular stand, please use the site and exhibitor plan on pages 76–77. Please note: if you ring these numbers from outside the UK, drop the 0 and add the international prefix +44 for the UK.

Key: AM – Art Marquee, LPM – Local Produce Marquee, M – Marquee, OD – Outdoor display, OM – Optics Marquee

## A

**A Baur & Co.(Travel) Ltd M2/67**  
Sri Lanka  
tourism@bours.com  
www.baurstravel.com

**A Rocha (Christians in Conservation) M6/46,47**  
Cambridgeshire 01387 710286  
international@arocha.org

**Abacus Hotels M7/8**  
Norfolk 01760 725725  
sales@abacushotels.co.uk  
www.abacushotels.co.uk

**Action for Swifts M8/48**  
Cambridgeshire 01223 860400  
actionforswifts@gmail.com

**African Bird Club M2/65,66**  
Cambridge  
info@africanbirdclub.org

**AG Sculptures AM/49**  
Cambridgeshire 01733 361046  
andrewglasby@aol.com

**Aigas Field Centre M7/24,41**  
Inverness-shire 01463 782443  
info@aigas.co.uk  
www.aigas.co.uk

**Albatross Encounter/Wrybill Birding Tours M2/46,47**  
New Zealand  
lynette@dolphin.co.nz  
www.albatrossencounter.com  
www.wrybill-tours.com

**Alison Ingram AM/45**  
West Sussex 01403 263179  
alison.ingram2@btopenworld.com  
www.alisoningram.co.uk

**Anatom M8/9,10** Edinburgh 0800 0323 505  
info@anatom.co.uk

**Andalucia Tourist Board M2/8,9,10** Spain +34 951 299 300  
skaddur@andalucia.org  
www.andalucia.org

**Andy Small Fine Art Photography M8/40** Hants 01256 322600  
andy@andysmall.co.uk

**Angela Hewitt Originals AM/41** Isle of Wight 01983 296110  
angela.hewitt@btclick.com

**Anglian Water OD/6**  
Rutland 01572 759601  
anglianwatereducation@rutlandwater.org.uk

**Anna de Ville Jewellery AM/11**  
West Midlands 0121 6248624  
anna@deville.fsnet.co.uk

**Anthony Theakston Ceramics AM/5**  
Lincolnshire 01427 628854  
anthonytheakston@btinternet.com

**ArcCona M3/48**  
Cambridgeshire 01223 355866  
cz@arccona.com

**Arctic & Antarctic Bound/Wildfoot Travel M2/1**  
Cheshire 0800 6785236  
simon@antarcticabound.com  
www.antarcticabound.com  
www.arcticbound.travel

**Argentina, National Institute of Tourism Promotion M7/32,33**  
Argentina +54 11 4850 1400  
info@argentina.travel

**Art Decoy AM/25**  
Norfolk 01508 530977  
artdecoy@hotmail.co.uk

**Asa Wright Nature Centre M6/12**  
Motmot Travel  
Northants 01327 359 622  
mail@motmottravel.com

**Ashanti African Tours Limited M1/17**  
Ghana  
info@ashantiafricantours.com  
www.ashantiafricantours.com  
ing-and-nature

**Asian Adventures M7/6**  
India  
mohit@asianadventures.in  
www.asianadventures.in

**Atropos M2/55**  
Cornwall 01326 290287  
atropos.editor@zen.co.uk

**Australian Birdwatching M2/40,41**  
Australia  
info@redmillhouse.com.au

**Australia's Northern Territory M3/3,4**  
London 0207 4384642  
fburrows@tourismnt.australia.com  
www.austaliasoutback.com

**Avian Adventures M3/17,18**  
West Midlands 01384 372013  
avianadventures@btinternet.com  
www.avianadventures.co.uk

**AvistarBrasil M3/19**  
Brazil +55 11 991 064 089

## B

**Balearic Islands Tourism Agency (A.T.B) M8/30** Balearics  
www.illesbalears.es

**Bat Conservation Trust OD/4**  
London 0207 8207181  
dmackie@bats.org.uk

**Batumi Raptor Count M5/5**  
johannes.jansene@batumiraptorcount.org  
www.batumiraptorcount.org

**BBC Wildlife Magazine M6/1,2** UK

**Bed and Birding M1/34**  
Bulgaria  
www.bedandbirding.com

**Beefayre M2/56**  
Market Harborough  
01858 43 44 92  
sales@beefayre.com

**Belize Central America M2/78**  
Belize  
nick@nick-davies.com

**Bellavista Cloud Forest Reserve and Lodge M7/37**  
Ecuador  
info@bellavistacloudforest.com  
www.bellavistacloudforest.com

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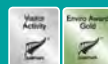


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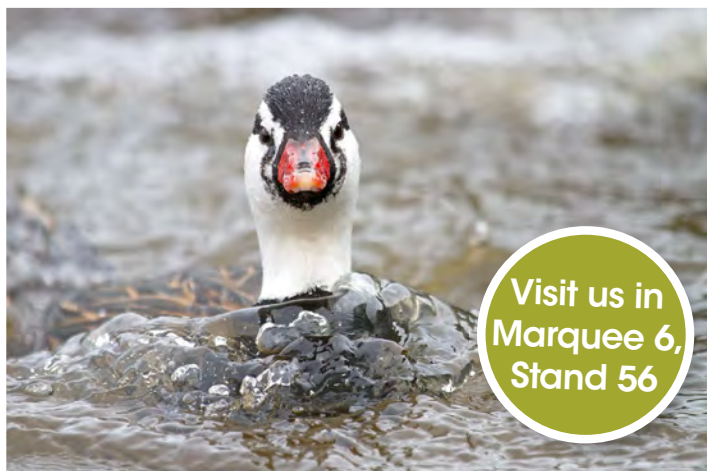






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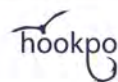
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margaretwelby@btinternet.com

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mariethereseking69@hotmail.com

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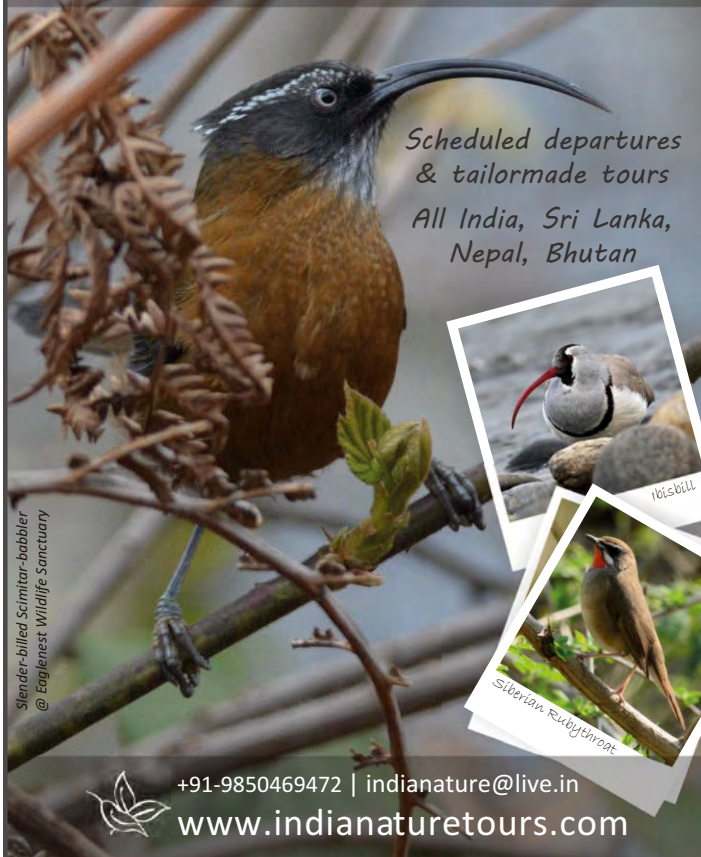
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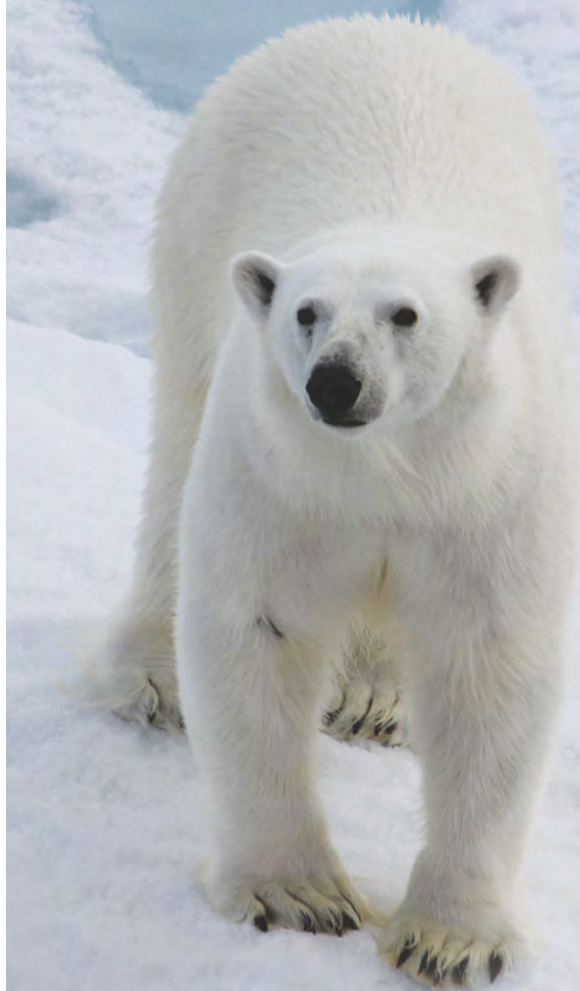
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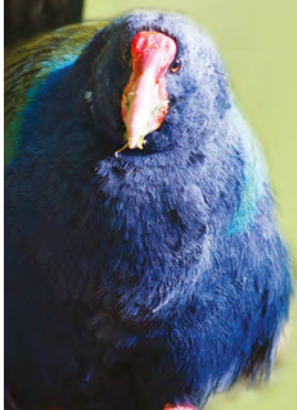
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mdemainwildart@aol.com

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mikelangman@blueyonder.co.uk

**Michael Potts AM/43**  
North Wales 01492 545148  
mikep@michaelpottsphotography.com

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mike@mikeread.co.uk

**Mike Warren AM/55**  
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info@neusiedlersee.com

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info@nicholatheakston.com

**Nick Day AM/3**  
UK 07763109020  
birdmanday@yahoo.com

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## ***“Why don’t we put an ad in the Birdfair Programme this year?” asked Daniela ...***



*“After all, we’ve been awarded Tripadvisor’s “Travellers’ Choice” Award two years running, and that’s the best in the business - it’s about time we let people know ... and we give a whole week’s holiday away to the Birdfair Auction every year, and another one in the raffle on our stand - I think we should blow our trumpet a bit. What d’you think?”*

*“OK then”, I replied, “you’re right, but it’s not just about the accommodation, the great food and wine, the safety and general value for money; we should mention the Birding Tours, the Photo Tours, the new Hides - things like the Golden Orioles in the garden, the whole nine yards ... ring ‘em up and see if they’ve got a half-page slot left ... and try to get a deal!” I called after her.*

***So she did - and she didn’t ... but here we are anyway, “Birding in Portugal” ... Stands 90 and 91 in Marquee 2!***




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Red car park



Pedestrian access to fair

To hides and lagoons

Ringling demo

OD12

## Key and information



Parking



Toilets



Catering



First Aid



Recycling

Fair Mobility – powered units available for hire, please call 01949 845189.

Please note that dogs are not allowed in the showground area (except guide dogs).

Please see page 4 of the programme for details of courtesy bus services to and from Oakham station.

Access and exit for vehicles from A1 (North and South) and A606 Nottingham etc

Access to camping area



Green car park A

Bus/taxi rank



Car parking for disabled visitors

Green car park B



GREEN ENTRANCE



Authors Forum

Book signing

Birdfair Events

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 1 | 12 |
| 2 | 11 |
| 3 | 10 |
| 4 | 9  |
| 5 | 8  |
| 6 | 7  |

LOCAL PRODUCE

Lecture Marquee 1



Lecture Marquee 3

Lecture Marquee 2

Pedestrian access 08:30–18:00

OD1

RED ENTRANCE

|    |    |
|----|----|
| 16 | 17 |
| 15 | 18 |
| 14 | 19 |
| 13 | 20 |
| 12 | 21 |
| 11 | 22 |
| 10 | 23 |
| 9  |    |
| 8  | 24 |
| 7  | 25 |
| 6  | 26 |
| 5  | 27 |
| 4  | 28 |
| 3  | 29 |
| 2  |    |
| 1  |    |

ART MARQUEE

OD10



Birdfair Sales

Birdfair Information  
Birdfair Office

|    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 19 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 46 |
| 18 |    |    |    |    | 47 |
| 17 | 20 | 45 |    |    | 48 |
| 16 | 21 | 44 |    |    | 49 |
| 15 | 22 | 43 |    |    | 50 |
| 14 | 23 | 42 |    |    | 51 |
| 13 | 24 | 41 |    |    | 52 |
| 12 |    |    |    |    | 53 |
| 11 |    |    |    |    | 54 |
| 10 | 25 | 40 |    |    | 55 |
| 9  | 26 | 39 |    |    | 56 |
| 8  |    |    |    |    | 57 |
| 7  | 27 | 38 |    |    | 58 |
| 6  | 28 | 37 |    |    | 59 |
| 5  | 29 | 36 |    |    | 60 |
| 4  | 30 | 35 |    |    | 61 |
| 3  | 31 | 34 |    |    | 62 |
| 2  | 32 | 33 |    |    | 63 |
| 1  |    |    |    |    | 64 |

MARQUEE 7

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 14 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 |
| 13 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 12 | 15 | 34 |    |    |    | 41 |
| 11 | 16 | 33 |    |    |    | 42 |
| 10 | 17 | 32 |    |    |    | 43 |
| 9  | 18 | 31 |    |    |    | 44 |
| 8  | 19 | 30 |    |    |    | 45 |
| 7  |    |    |    |    |    | 46 |
| 6  |    |    |    |    |    | 47 |
| 5  | 20 | 29 |    |    |    | 48 |
| 4  | 21 | 28 |    |    |    | 49 |
| 3  | 22 | 27 |    |    |    | 50 |
| 2  | 23 | 26 |    |    |    | 51 |
| 1  | 24 | 25 |    |    |    | 52 |
|    |    |    |    |    |    | 53 |
|    |    |    |    |    |    | 54 |

MARQUEE 6

OD2  
OD3  
OD4  
OD5

|    |    |
|----|----|
| 39 | 1  |
| 38 | 2  |
| 37 | 3  |
| 36 | 4  |
| 35 | 5  |
| 34 |    |
| 33 | 6  |
| 32 | 7  |
| 31 | 8  |
| 30 | 9  |
|    | 10 |
|    | 11 |
|    | 12 |
|    | 13 |

MARQUEE 5

|    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|
| 40 | 39 | 16 | 1  |
| 41 | 38 | 17 | 2  |
| 42 | 37 | 18 | 3  |
| 43 | 36 | 19 | 4  |
| 44 | 35 | 20 | 5  |
| 45 | 34 | 21 | 6  |
| 46 | 33 | 22 | 7  |
| 47 |    |    | 8  |
| 48 | 32 | 23 | 9  |
| 49 | 31 | 24 | 10 |
| 50 | 30 | 25 | 11 |
| 51 | 29 | 26 | 12 |
| 52 | 28 | 27 | 13 |
| 53 |    |    | 14 |
|    |    |    | 15 |

MARQUEE 8

# Site and









# Who and where

Find the stand you are looking for. Use this colour-coded index with the Birdfair site plan on pages 76–77 to find the location of all the exhibiting companies and their stands.

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|---|----------|
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| Whale and Dolphin Company                    | M5/31       |
| Wild About Travel                            | M5/10,11    |
| Wildlife Romania                             | M5/32       |
| Zoothera Global Birding                      | M5/33       |
| MARQUEE 6                                    |             |
| Asa Wright Nature Centre(Motmot Travel)      | M6/12       |
| Birdquest & Wild Images                      | M6/3,4      |
| Birdtour Asia Limited                        | M6/52       |
| Cuba Birding Tours                           | M6/14       |
| Enchanted India                              | M6/18       |
| Estonian Tourist Board                       | M6/33,34    |
| Far South Expeditions (Fantastico Sur)       | M6/56       |
| Heatherlea Birdwatching                      | M6/57,58,59 |
| Heights Hotel                                | M6/48,49    |
| Honduras                                     | M6/20,21    |
| Lawson's Birding, Wildlife & Custom Safaris  | M6/44,45    |
| Naturetrek Ltd                               | M6/38,39,40 |
| Nebelina Forest                              | M6/30,31    |
| Partnership for International Birding        | M6/30,31    |
| Safari Consultants Ltd                       | M6/53,54    |
| Travelling Naturalist                        | M6/27       |

| MARQUEE 8                               |          |
|---|----------|
| Balearic Islands Tourism Agency (A.T.B) | M8/30    |
| Blue Elephant                           | M8/19    |
| Broads National Park                    | M8/53    |
| Cayman Islands Department of Tourism    | M8/1     |
| Cinnamon Nature Trails & Walkers Tours  | M8/35    |
| CNP Safaris                             | M8/4     |
| Costa Rica Birding                      | M8/22    |
| Green Castle Estate                     | M8/21    |
| Naturzoom – Birding Euskadi             | M8/29    |
| Nature Odyssey                          | M8/36    |
| Neophron Tours                          | M8/52    |
| Sri Lanka Tourist Board                 | M8/31    |
| The Azores Promotion Islands Agency     | M8/20    |
| Uganda Tourism Board                    | M8/23,32 |
| Visit North Iceland                     | M8/14,33 |
| OUTDOOR DISPLAY                         |          |
| Lee Valley Regional Park Authority      | OD/1     |
| LOCAL PRODUCE                           |          |
| Brockleby's Pies- Food with Provenance  | LPM/5    |
| Deeping Fudge                           | LPM/2    |
| From the Norebook                       | LPM/6    |
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